582

614 Uru *warugs* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane
554 and Unapane.

Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and
291 when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment
184 called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore
leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain
amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and
leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the
yaku[1].

The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece
685 of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his
609 young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers,
778 even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be
826 killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man
being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to
vendettas[2].

764 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse
being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution
768 were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not
seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned
to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown
775 away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae
Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and
769 prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the
Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days
consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder
771 Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offer-
184 ings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda
Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew
that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was
presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at
Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

535 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese
in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their
751 villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance
kolamaduwa which the old man pointed out was derived from a

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[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

535 751 shorter ceremony *ruwela*, this being an older name than *kolamaduwa*[1].

782 It appeared that the invocations at present in use among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas were those used in the old man's youth, for although he had not, as he stated (truthfully we believe), been closely associated with the Veddas for many years he recognised a number of Vedda invocations which were sung to him, as identical with those sung in his youth, and named the occasions on which each was used. *Maligi* was recognised as sung when honey was taken; the invocation at the beginning of the *kirikoraha* ceremony (cf. p. 285) was promptly named, and the occasions of its use pointed out, but the charm used when driving monkeys was not recognised. A song sung for amusement by the Veddas beginning *Mamini mamini ma deyo* was immediately recognised, as were two of the invocations of the Kolamaduwa ceremony, but considering how Sinhalese in substance this ceremony is this is perhaps not of much importance.

161 At the present day the number of Veddas living their natural forest life is necessarily few, for their territory has been gradually encroached upon by the Sinhalese who are inveterate poachers. The Veddas, who were never numerous within recent historic times, are now rapidly dying out, while many have settled among the Sinhalese and so lost their identity. We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgala but among the Nuwaragala Hills. At Nilgala itself there are no Veddas at the present day, though the local peasant Sinhalese doubtless have much Vedda blood in their veins. The Henebedda and Danigala Veddas are the descendants of those recorded by Bailey in 1863, and the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are the descendants of those known and described by the old Kandyan who visited us at Bandaraduwa.

166 563 **Hennebedda.** At Hennebedda we met a number of families living together in the Bendiyagalge caves. They had come to this their largest cave, from several settlements all within a few hours' journey. The genealogies show that at least

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[1] These ceremonies are described in Chapter IX.

temperament. Travellers have called the Vedda morose, and stated that he never laughs; this belief has doubtless been strengthened by the disagreeable behaviour of the "show" Veddas (see p. 50), yet Veddas have told us how they throw leaves in the air and laugh and dance for joy. Nevill was certainly right when he said, "They are a merry people, delighting in riddles, songs and jests. Mr Hartshorn observed some Vaeddas who never laughed in his presence. They must have been either terrified, or sulky and offended, for those I have seen, of all clans, laugh often and merrily, a habit very strongly contrasted with that of the Sinhalese, who scarcely ever go beyond a smile. They burst into a verse of song, now and again, apparently from sheer exuberance of spirits, and any ludicrous incident amuses them[1]."

At Bendiyagalge we were particularly well situated to observe their behaviour, our camp being out of sight of the Vedda cave but within 200 yards of it, here we could listen to their unrestrained chatter and laughter which was especially noticeable at sunset. It is true that their faces express no emotion of pleasure or gratitude when they are given exactly what they expect. Thus, white cloth, which the men like to wear, is well known to them, they buy it themselves from the Moormen pedlars, it is the usual present for a European to make to Veddas, and they receive it with perfectly stolid faces, and are hence dubbed sullen. We had an excellent example of this at Henebedda when we gave a piece of white cloth to Poromala the senior of the group, whom we knew well and who had frequently smiled and laughed in our presence. When, however, a sharp pruning knife was given him his face beamed like a schoolboy's, he ran his thumb along the blade and tried its edge on pieces of grass. Things new to them which we showed

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[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 191. Veddas often dance for a few moments when pleased, thus a Henebedda Vedda on being given a piece of sacking to cover himself with after complaining of cold, immediately held it over his head, bowed his body forward and went through a few dance steps, singing the while. On another occasion this man and three companions (all young men) began to dance spontaneously. This was about 9 p.m. one night in the courtyard of the Ambilinne Rest House, where they had visited us, their sense of well-being in this case may have been stimulated by a liberal feed of curry and rice which had been given them, but we do not think they danced in payment for this.

[535
12-3]

Adoption is not practised, for the custom of a near relative 597
looking after children who have lost their parents cannot be 768
called by this name.

Dances play no part in the domestic life of the Veddas, 535
for, although Veddas may perform a few steps of a dance as
a sign of pleasure, their dances are mostly if not entirely
ceremonial.

CHAPTER IX

CEREMONIAL DANCES

WITH a single possible exception the dances of the Veddas are ceremonial and are performed with the object of becoming possessed by a *yaka* in the manner that has already been stated in Chapter VI where the subjective phenomena of possession are discussed. 535 786 The majority of the ceremonial dances described in this chapter are pantomimic, and so well illustrate the objective manifestations of the condition of possession that little need be said on this subject, though it may be well to repeat our conviction that there is no considerable element of pretence in the performance of the shaman. The sudden collapse which accompanies the performance of some given act of the pantomime, usually an important event towards which the action has been leading up, is the feature that is most difficult to explain. According to the Veddas themselves it occurs when a *yaka* suddenly leaves the individual possessed, but it does not invariably accompany the cessation of possession, and it may equally occur when the individual becomes possessed, as at the Bandaraduwa *Nae Yaku* ceremony described on pages 233 to 237, where the first sign of possession shown by the brothers of the dead man was their collapse into the arms of their supporters. This can be explained as the result of expectancy, they expected to be overcome by the spirit of the deceased, and in fact this happened. In this connection we may refer to a Sinhalese "devil ceremony" which we witnessed in the remote jungle village of Gonagolla in the Eastern Province. One of us has described this ceremony elsewhere[1], but we would here

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[1] Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journal Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXVIII, 1908.

[P.209]

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786

specially refer to the condition of the *katandirale* or "dev
dancer" when dealing with the dangerous demon Riri Yak
Although he took special precautions to prevent the demo
entering him, that is to say to avoid possession by the demo
he almost collapsed, requiring to be supported in the arms of a
assistant as under the assaults of the *yaka* he tottered with draw
features and half open quivering lips and almost closed ey
Yet avowedly he was not possessed by the demon, but on th
contrary was successful in warding off possession. His who
appearance was that of a person suffering from some amount
shock and in a condition of partial collapse, while the rapidi
with which he passed into deep sleep immediately Riri Yak
and his almost equally dreaded consort Riri Yakini, had l
him, also favour the genuine character of his sufferings, co
cerning which he said that although he had never complete
lost consciousness he had been near doing so and had felt gid
and nauseated[1]. Here we have a condition only a degree sh
of possession, occurring in an individual who not only hoped a
expected to avoid being possessed by the spirit whom he invok
to come to the offering, but took elaborate precautions to prev
it. Had he become possessed it would have been a disas
which would have led to his illness and perhaps death, a
would certainly have frustrated the object of the ceremo
Here there can have been no desire to lose consciousness,
as the result of anticipation of the attack of the *yaka*
katandirale came near collapse.

This in our opinion throws a flood of light on Ve
possession and the collapse which may take place at
beginning, but it does not directly explain the collapse o
experienced when a *yaka* leaves a person. But here we r
seek assistance in the idea of analogy; when a spirit leaves
body, collapse and unconsciousness, permanent (death)
temporary (swoon, fainting fits or sleep), ensue. When
yaka leaves the body which for the time it has enti

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[1] During the condition of partial collapse the dancer's face was covered with
and so felt clammy, but this may only have been the result of his previous exer
his pulse was small and rapid and was certainly over 130 though the cond
prevented it being accurately counted.

dominated, what more natural than that collapse should occur 535 or be feigned by the less honest or susceptible practitioners? 786 There is no doubt that the Vedda ceremonies make considerable demand on the bodily powers of the dancers, but this is not so great as in the case of the Sinhalese devil ceremony of Gonagolla, since the Vedda ceremonies are of shorter duration—none we saw lasted over two hours and the majority certainly did not take so long. In spite of this we noted, after more than one ceremony, that the shaman was genuinely tired, and this was the case at Sitala Wanniya, where Kaira appeared actually exhausted at the end of the Pata Yaka ceremony.

We may now refer to the steps of the Vedda dance. The 535 Drs Sarasin have described the steps of the arrow dance of the Henebedda Veddas in an elaborate and rather formal manner. We shall shortly quote their description of this dance and meanwhile content ourselves with summarising the movements of the Vedda dances. Essentially, these appear to consist of steps taken alternately with each foot, each step being followed by a couple of pats on the ground delivered with the ball of the foot that is in advance, and after each such movement with right or left foot a half turn is made. The rhythm of the dance is kept by swaying the body gently from the waist, the hands (when not beating the body or holding an object) being allowed to swing freely; with each half turn forward the body is inclined forward and the head bent so that the hair falls over the face, and with each half turn backwards the head is thrown backwards. The dance always begins slowly and gently, the back foot still touching the ground while that foot with which the step has been made performs the double pat, so that just at first it is little more than a shuffle, soon, however, the feet are raised more and more and longer paces are taken, the back foot no longer remains on the ground while the double pat is made and the swaying and bending of the body is greatly increased.

When the *yaka* enters the person of a shaman it is customary 535 for him to inspect the offerings, and if he is pleased—which is 787 almost invariably the case—he will show his pleasure. This is usually done by bending the head low over the offering, then

535 springing away and shouting "Ah! Ah!" while taking short
deep breaths. The natural outcome of the *yaka's* gratitude is
787 a promise of favours to the community. When prophesying
good luck, the shaman places one or both hands on the
participant's shoulders, or if he carries an *aude* or other sacred
object, the shaman holds this against the latter's chest or, more
rarely, presses it on the top of his head. His whole manner is
agitated and he usually shuffles his feet, speaks in a hoarse
somewhat guttural voice taking short deep breaths, and
punctuates his remarks with a deep "Ah! Ah!"

With regard to the arrows and other special objects which
787 are used when invoking the *yaku*, in which class we include such
778 bower-like structures as the *alutyakagama*, the *ruwala* and the
535 *kolomaduwa*, all described in this Chapter, we must point out that
these simply act as conductors and resting places for the *yaku*
It was stated that Kande Yaka could not and would not come
when invoked, unless his arrow were held, and the same ide
accounts for the arrow dance, performed round an arrow struck
in the ground in order to obtain game. Again the leaves in
the bower-like structures with the aid of which the *yaku* wer
invoked were considered the resting place of the *yaku* which
they left in order to enter the shaman. The number of *yak*
who came to the bower was not thought to be limited to thos
who possessed the shaman, on the contrary, important *yaku* wer
thought to bring their attendants (*piriwari*), who remaine
among the leaves which their lord left to possess the shama
and it was to drive away the *yaku* who might unduly prolon
their stay in the bower prepared for them, that the leaves we
beaten and more or less stripped from the bowers at the end
the ceremony.

Before leaving the subject we would point out that thou
778 *yaku* might be spoken of as arrow-yaka (Itale Yaka), bow-ya
(Dunne Yakini) and so forth, such names do not imply that t
yaka in question is immanent in the object or is believed
stand in specially close relationship to all objects of that cla
In the case of Itale Yaka the idea was "the *yaka* who is invok
by means of an arrow"; in the case of Dunne Yakini the na
simply refers to the skill of the nameless heroine who killed

boar wounded by the companions of Bandura, as is related in the Bambura Yaka dance. 778

The Henebedda Veddas washed before performing or assisting at the *kirikoraha* seen by us, and every Vedda who invoked the *yaku*, either let down his hair before beginning to dance or while dancing, in the latter instance presumably as he felt "possession" coming upon him. Many Veddas put on the *hangala* before dancing, this being a length of white cloth worn round the waist as is shown in many of the photographs reproduced in this chapter. Presumably this was not worn for the arrow dance, which is especially performed by unsuccessful hunters without any special preparation. We do not think that a leaf girdle was ever worn as a ceremonial garment when dancing. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya said that at some time, which he put more than three generations ago, there were Veddas, whom he called *Attukola Veddo*, who lived so remote from the Sinhalese that they had no cloth and so always wore leaf girdles, but he was quite confident that no Veddas who had cloth ever wore such girdles especially to invoke the *yaku*. This agrees with Nevill's conclusions[1] and does not conflict with the experience of the Sarasins[2]. 187 531 291 [515]

The Roman numbers in parentheses after references to invocations in the accounts of the ceremonies described in this chapter refer to the invocations given in Chapter X.

THE ARROW DANCE.

This, the simplest of the Vedda dances, has been described at length by the Drs Sarasin who saw it danced by "Veddas of the Nilgala district[3]." We have already quoted Bailey's account of the arrow dance as he found it danced by the ancestors of these Veddas two generations ago, and Monsieur Emile 535

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[1] "I have especially questioned the best informed Vaeddas whether leaves were worn, either at ceremonies or otherwise. They all say yes, they were worn once, when cotton cloth was hard and dear to get, by those who lived where there were no Riti trees. They were only worn by the poorest, and from necessity, not choice. The leaves chosen were those of shrubs, the branches of which ended in rather pendulous sprays of foliage, and these were tucked under the waist string as a sort of apron." (*Op. cit.* p. 188.)

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 387—389.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 512—514.

535 Deschamps has given an account of the same dance as it occurs among the village Veddas of Bintenne, while it has also been mentioned by other authors including Davy and Tennant.

Figures 1 and 2 of Plate XXVI show this dance as we saw it performed at Henebedda. An arrow was thrust into the ground and round this the Veddas circled, singing an invocation and keeping time by slapping their flanks with their open hands. The Drs Sarasin have carefully analysed the movements performed in this dance, and the following account is taken from their work.

"Only men dance. They form a circle round an arrow thrust into the ground; they do not touch one another and move slowly round the arrow....Each dancer turns once towards the left, in doing which he keeps the right leg motionless and steps convulsively forwards on the ground with the left, keeping time and giving the body a slight jerk backwards; then when he has executed a half turn he remains standing on the left leg and makes spasmodic trembling movements with the right as he pushes off from the ground. Thus continually executing half turns, and after completing one half turn using that leg which has just been moved as a support, the dancer slowly proceeds backwards in a circle round the arrow. Each dancer pays no regard to his neighbour while executing his circling movements, his sole object being to get round the arrow in the manner described; so that all the dancers are not making precisely the same movement at one time. For example, if one dancer turns on his left leg and his neighbour on his right leg at the same time then it happens that the two sometimes have their faces and sometimes their backs towards each other....Although the legs, as described, come comparatively little and at all events not extensively into play, there being no jumping or hopping...the arms are moved the more vigorously. As the body swings round they are extended and flung about and at the conclusion of the turn they are violently flung away from the body; after the performance of every half turn the dancers beat hard on their bellies, which take the place of musical instruments of which they have none....The head which

Plate XXVI

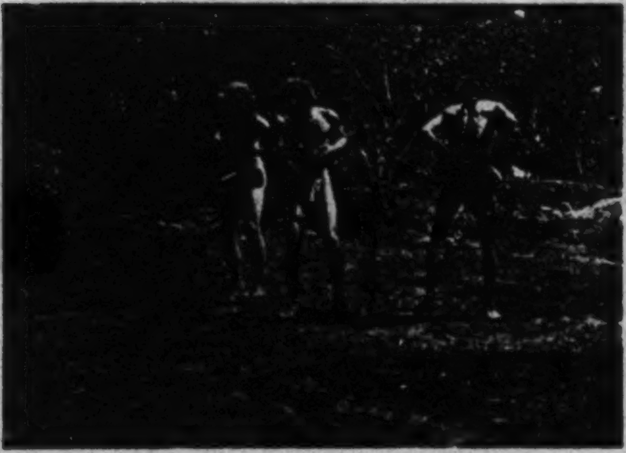

Fig. 1. Arrow dance (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Arrow dance (Henebedda)

[facing p.214]

is thrown back at the completion of every turn is flung forward and downward in the direction of the movement while this is taking place. In doing this the mane-like bush of hair is tossed forwards like a horse's tail over the face; subsequently on the completion of every half turn it is tossed back again as the head is flung back, so that the hair is constantly being swung through the air from the right back to the left front and vice versa; this happens independently of the direction of movement round the arrow....As the dancers at the same time gasp out loudly a monotonous song with which their movements keep time—they work themselves up into a state of extreme nervous excitement and the sweat pours down them; the beating on the stomach becomes louder and louder...then after a time one after another falls full length on the ground exhausted, and remains on his back for a time still uttering howls between his gasps and trembling convulsively at the same time in all his limbs. Then suddenly all rise at once and the dance is at an end[1]."

Although this account shows that the dance performed for the Sarasins was rather more vigorously enacted than the one danced for our benefit, it recalls in violence of gesture the figures of a dance which we saw at Wellampelle among the village Veddas. One of these men evidently knew what was expected of him by strangers, for almost directly he saw us he began to dance and soon lay quivering on the ground. Obviously such exhibitions as this are not examples of genuine possession, nor was the arrow dance we saw at Henebedda which was danced at our request, and we believe that all, or almost all, the arrow dances described in literature must simply be regarded as more or less accurate rehearsals[2].

Further, the accounts given by various authors show that the dances they saw were danced with varying degrees of frenzy, the difference in some instances being so marked as to give force to the Sarasins' suggestion that the arrow dance varies in detail in different communities.

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[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 512, 513.

[2] The pantomime of honey gathering enacted for our benefit by the Henebedda Veddas, and those of Sitala Wanniya, show that the Veddas are good actors and enter thoroughly into the spirit of the parts they take.

535 787 We were told at Bandaraduwa that if men had no luck in hunting they might thrust an arrow into the ground, decorate it with leaves of the *na* tree (*Messua ferruginea*) or the *mille*, and dance round it. If a shaman were present, which was not necessary, he would naturally take part in this, and any number might participate. This dance was performed at our request, the shaman and a Vedda called Tambia taking part in it. Two clusters of *na* leaves were tied to an arrow, one just below the feathers and another immediately above the blade. This was struck in the ground (Plate XXVII, fig. 1) and the dancers slowly moved round it singing an invocation (No. XV). Soon they both became possessed, the shaman falling into the arms of his supporter (Plate XXVII, fig. 2), almost immediately after which he came to one of the onlookers and promised him a sambar deer if he would hunt in a westerly direction early the next morning. Several times during the dance the performers touched the leaves tied to the upper part of the arrow, and bending low gathered them up to their faces (as in Plate XXVIII, fig. 1), while their hair mingled with the leaves. The shaman afterwards explained that the *yaka* first came to the arrow and the leaves tied to it, and then entered the persons of the dancers who became possessed. Before the *yaka* left the dancers bent low over the arrow shaking their heads violently, and after the dance both men salaamed to the arrow.

776 The *yaka* invoked in this dance was sometimes called Itale Yaka (Arrow Yaka), and though identical with Kande Yaka, there was nevertheless a tendency to think of Itale Yaka as a separate spirit, who was not so generally well disposed as Kande Yaka. We discovered this by the shaman refusing to sing the invocation into the phonograph when we were surrounded by children, lest his attention being attracted, the *yaka* should come, which might be dangerous to the little ones. It must be [177] remembered that the Bandaraduwa community had been much exposed to foreign influence, so that there is nothing surprising in their *yaku* having to a certain extent assumed the dangerous complexion of Sinhalese and Tamil demons.

535 Although the arrow dance originally had, and still has, a religious significance, since it is danced to procure game and as

Plate XXVII

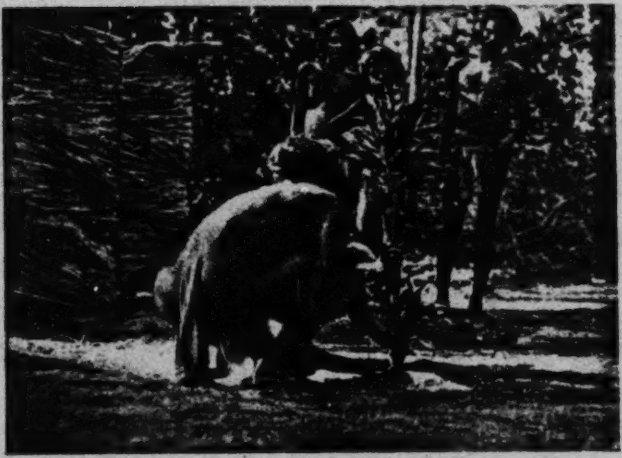

Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony. Arrow with *Na* leaves attached (Bandaraduwa)*

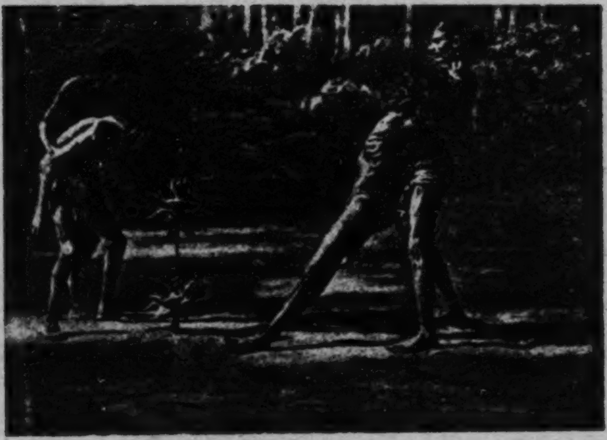

Fig. 2. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*

[facing p.216]

Plate XXVIII

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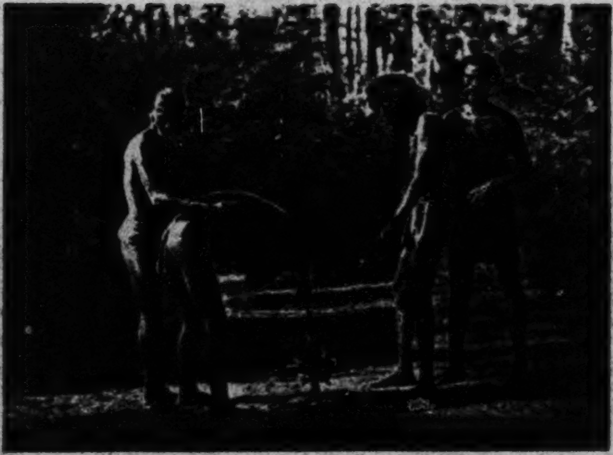

Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*

[516]

Fig. 2. The Adukku Denawa ceremony (Henebedda)

[facing p.218]

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a means of propitiating Kande Yaka or interesting him in the hunters, it may also be danced for pleasure. In this case it seems to lose much of its peculiar character and tends to degenerate into a dance made up of fragments of the dances proper to a number of different ceremonies, which varies in constitution according to the fancy of the dancers. But that such performances are derived from ceremonial dances is shown by the imitation of the actions of the shaman which one or more of the dancers may introduce.

The dance we cite next was performed in the courtyard of the Public Works Department bungalow at Ambilinne, where we gave a night's lodging to four of the Henebedda Veddas. These were some of the first Veddas we met and the dance they performed that evening was the first Vedda dance we had seen, and it was not until we had seen a number of Vedda ceremonies that we recognised that the dance in question was a parody of their own religious dances, performed for their own amusement after what was to them an unusually good meal[1].

After a little singing three or four men began to dance, the time being about 9 p.m. Their action was quite unconstrained, and each man went his own way, though a rhythm was supplied by the song refrain and the slapping of their hands on their chests and flanks. In the opening figure, in which an arrow was planted in the ground, the performers began to move round it right hands inwards and clockwise, but very soon one performer was circling anti-clockwise between the other two going clockwise. The two performers who had not planted their arrows held these in their hands in front of them, one hand lightly grasping the blade and the other the head of the arrow, while with body somewhat bent forward they moved the arrows from side to side as they danced. The steps were taken with legs tolerably wide apart, the weight of the body being supported on one leg while the other was scraped along the ground by somewhat tilting the pelvis. This movement took place alternately on the two legs, though sometimes a double pat was substituted

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[1] In this respect our dance resembles that witnessed by M. Deschamps (*Au Pays des Veddas*, pp. 387, 388), which was danced spontaneously by a number of village Veddas of Bintenne.

535 for the simple scrape of the ground. After some time when the circle had become quite broken the three dancers grunted loudly "Oh-h-h," and held their arrows up to the sky toward which they waved them before suddenly falling flat on their backs. They were lifted up and supported by a companion, and they then approached the Sinhalese headman who was present and promised him and one of us a white buffalo each for the next day. This was done in a manner we afterwards recognised to have been an excellent imitation of the actions of one possessed by the *yaku*, though it is certain that this dance was not a real possession dance; while the condition of the pulse in the dancers, surprisingly quiet in view of the violent exercise they had taken, showed that the falling down was not due to exhaustion. In other figures no arrow was planted in the ground and the dance did not begin with a circular movement; in some of these figures the point of the arrow which is in the right hand may be lowered almost to the ground, and the obliquely inclined arrow swept forward and backward perhaps in imitation of a shaman possessed by Kande Yaka tracking the sambar in the manner described in the account of the *kirikoraha*.

THE KIRIKORAHA CEREMONY.

796 The pantomimic ceremonial dance by which the favour of the spirits (*yaku*) of the hunting hero Kande Wanniya and his brother Bilindi is secured is called *kirikoraha*. It must be noted that this term, literally translated, signifies "milk bowl," and though the presentation to the *yaku* of a *kirikoraha*, i.e. a pot containing coconut milk, is essential in several other ceremonies they were not called *kirikoraha*. The "milk" consists of the [272] fluid which can be squeezed from the shredded meat of the coconut and is mixed with water. If the coconut juice be not diluted excessively the fluid so produced has a very pleasant flavour, and in appearance is not unlike milk[1]. Whenever "milk" is spoken of as offered to the *yaku* this fluid is meant: the "water" of the coconut is not valued, and though it may be used in preparing the milk instead of water (as was the case at

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[1] This is the usual method throughout Ceylon of making the coconut milk so largely used as a flavouring agent.

796 Some rice with coconut and chillies had previously been cooked at the cave together with certain portions of the deer, the flesh from the head, sternum and front of the ribs, and the whole was brought down to the *talawa*. This food formed the offering (*aduk*), and the ceremony of *adukku denawa* or "offering the food" was performed before the dance began. The shaman, Randu Wanniya, squatted in front of the food, and with his hands together repeated a dedicatory invocation to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, which lasted nearly ten minutes, and consisted mainly, if not entirely, of repetitions of invocation No. XIX. It was performed in gratitude for all deer and sambar killed, and in it the *yaku* were invited to accept the offering of food which was left for them for a short time and afterwards eaten by the Veddas themselves. Fig. 2 of Plate XXVIII shows the shaman invoking the *yaku* with the offering in front of him. This ceremony, called *adukku denawa* (literally "the giving of cooked food"), is always held before a *kirikoraha* when game has been killed, but it is not itself part of the latter ceremony.

An open part of the *talawa* near the caves was selected as a dancing ground, and a tripod called *mukkaliya* was made by binding three sticks together on which an earthen pot, the *kirikoraha*, was placed, and a ceremonial arrow (*aude*) laid upon it.

The shaman took a coconut and the *aude*, held them to his head and salaamed while Poromala smeared some resin on a stick and afterwards censed the *aude* which was held so that the smoke might eddy round it, for thus would Kande Yaka smell the incense and be pleased (Plate XXIX, fig. 1). At the same time the shaman repeated the invocation (No. XIX) to Kande Yaka.

This appeared to be one of the many incidents pointing to the fact that when *yaku* are invoked they first come to their special vehicles (Kande always to an *aude*, other *yaku* to leaves, swords and various articles), and from these enter the person of the shaman.

796 All sang the invocation, and the shaman danced round the
535 tripod holding the *aude* and coconut together in both hands and
787 waving them rhythmically as he performed the orthodox Vedda
step, i.e. one pace with each foot followed by a couple of pats on the ground with the ball of the same foot, every step being

Plate XXIX

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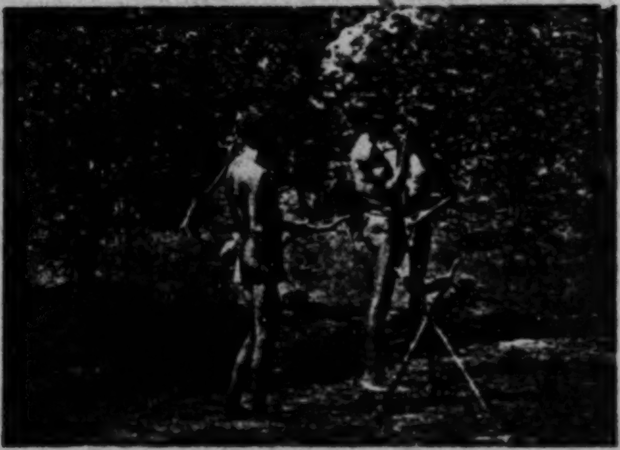

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, carrying the *aude* and coconut (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *aude* and coconut (Henebedda)

[facing p. 220]

Plate XXX

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787
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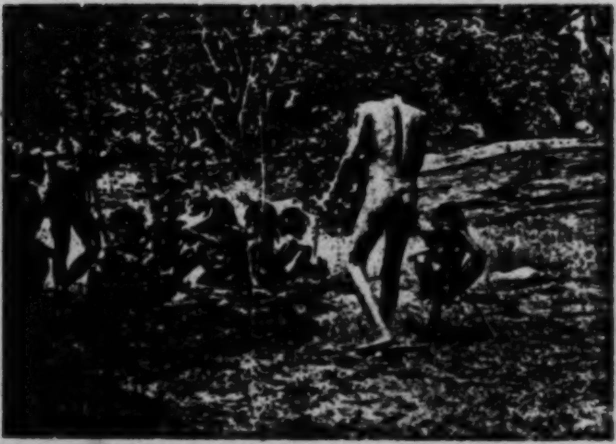

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *aude* and coconut (Henebedda)

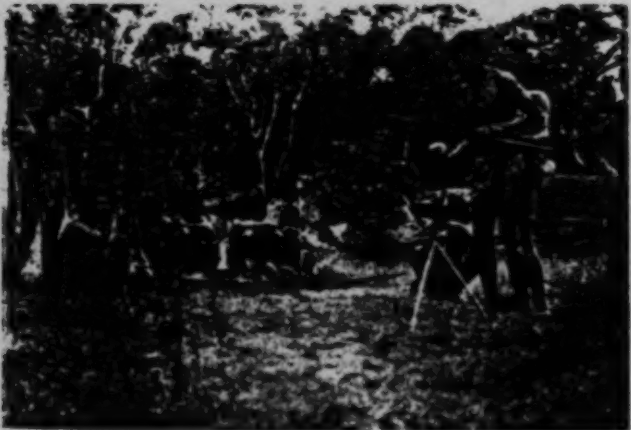

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman breaking the coconut (Henebedda)

[facing p. 228b]

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followed by a half turn of the body to the accompaniment of sounds produced by some of those who were not dancing slapping their sides. The shaman next sang the invocation to Bilindi Yaka (No. XXI), and after a short time he showed signs of becoming possessed; he shivered and shook his head, and with the *aude* in his right hand he struck the coconut which he held in his left and broke it in half (Plate XXX, fig. 2), letting the water fall into the *kirikoraha*. The way in which the nut split was prophetic; if a clean break was made the animal to be promised later would be a female, but if the edges were jagged a male would be shot. The shaman was now possessed by Bilindi Yaka, and with half the nut in each hand came to each of us in turn, placed his arms on our shoulders, and in the hoarse gasping voice of the *yaka* promised us good hunting and protection from wild animals.

Two of the younger Veddas, Poromala and Sita Wanniya, scraped the meat of the coconut with the *aude* to make the milk, and afterwards placed one half shell on the end of one of the sticks forming the tripod, and the other below the *kirikoraha*. Leaves taken from any tree, but said to represent betel leaves, were also placed in the *kirikoraha*. There was no reason for the particular position of the coconut shells, but as they were considered part of the offering to the *yaku*, it would have been considered disrespectful to the *yaku* to place them on the ground. This rule was observed in all the dances that we witnessed. All sang the invocation again, and the shaman, Randa Wanniya, continued to dance, holding the handle of the *aude* in the right hand and the point of the blade in the left, turning it with a rotatory movement as he danced, gradually swaying his body more and more and lifting his feet higher from the ground. He went to the *kirikoraha* and inspected the milk, letting it run through his fingers (Plate XXXI, fig. 1), and dropping some on the *aude* to see if it was rich enough. Apparently he was satisfied with its quality, and soon he fell back into the arms of Sita Wanniya who supported him. After a short time he revived with much quivering of muscles and gasping for breath, and taking a handful of the coconut milk he shouted and approached Tissahami the Vedda *Arachi*[1] (who

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[1] This man, concerning whom something has been said on p. 41, was known to

796 was then staying in our camp) and scattered the milk over him,
535 while with the right hand on his shoulder he expressed his
787 pleasure in seeing him and promised him luck in hunting. Then after prophesying good hunting to each of us in turn and to several of the Veddas, Bilindi Yaka left the shaman.

Randu Wanniya again danced eastward round the *kirikoraha*, holding the *aude* in both hands, but soon he began to crouch and point it to the ground, and then pretended to thrust it at imaginary footprints (Plate XXXI, fig. 2). His excited manner showed that he was now possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he represented following the slot of a sambar. Soon Sita Wanniya took the *aude* away from him and gave him a bow and arrow, and the tracking continued amidst intense excitement (Plate XXXII, fig. 1). Sita Wanniya followed closely, ready to support the shaman if he should fall, while others pointed out the slot to him till at last, a basket having been placed on the ground, he drew his bow and transfixed it.

786 Plate XXXII, fig. 2 shows the group round the shaman as
787 the arrow left the bow. As the arrow sped the shaman fell back seemingly exhausted and almost senseless. The *yaka* did not, however, finally depart from the shaman, but merely went to the quarry to ascertain if his arrow had proved fatal. The shaman soon came to himself, apparently satisfied, and beat his head (Plate XXXIII, fig. 1) over the *kirikoraha*, and then shouting "Ah, ah!" in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaka* came to each of us in turn and placed the *aude* on our heads, thereby granting us jungle favour, after which he went to several of the Veddas prophesying good luck in hunting to each of them (Plate XXXIII, fig. 2). Then taking the half shells of the coconut in either hand and waving them about, he danced round the *kirikoraha* and beat his head over the pot so that the *yaka* might drink, and afterwards fell into the arms of Sita Wanniya, who had been following, ready to support him. Again the shaman revived, and, putting his arms on our interpreter, promised him victory in all undertakings. Then returning to the *kirikoraha*, and having given the *aude* to one of

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the Henebedda community and was much respected both because of his Vedda blood and because of his success as a shaman and medicine man (*vederala*).

Plate XXXI

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Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman sanctions the offering of coconut milk (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman touching the [illegible] (Henebedda)

[facing p. 222]

Plate XXXII

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Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman tracking the sambur (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman shoots the sambur (Henebedda)

[facing p. 222 b]

Plate XXXIII

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Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman bends his head over the coconut milk (Henebedda)

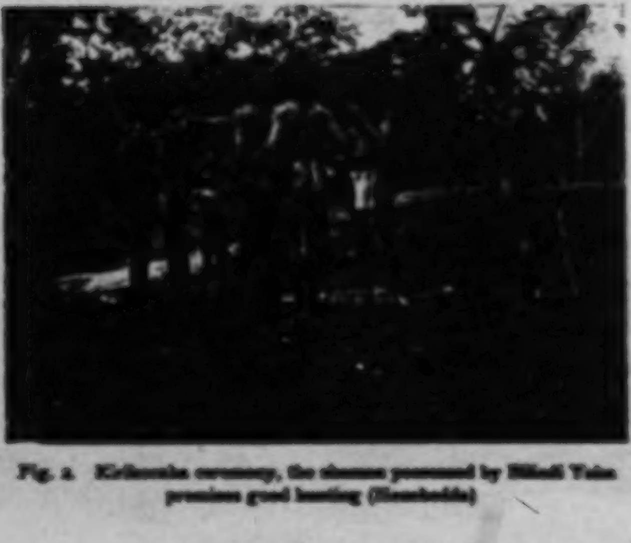

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman possessed by Bilindi Yaka promises good hunting (Henebedda)

[facing p. 2225]

786
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Plate XXXIV

Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot (Henebedda)

[facing p.222d]

796 not possess an *aude*, having given his to a white man who knew not its value, but since an *aude* must be used when invoking Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, Handuna unfastened the blade from one of his shooting arrows to represent an *aude*. Having put on the *hangala* he burnt some resin and censed the *kirikoraha*. This had been placed on a support of the usual form in the centre of the dancing ground, and the arrow blade and some betel leaves had been placed in it. Two pots of boiled rice had been placed upon a small platform or altar (*maessa*) which had been built for, and used in, another ceremony.

796 The shaman raised the coconut and salaamed to the *kirikoraha* and then danced round and round it, singing the
● 535 invocation given in Chapter X (No. XVI) and exhibiting the
787 nut to the *yaku* and thrusting at the pot as he danced though not actually hitting it. The step was the usual one with many half turns and performed clockwise. Handuna now invoked Bilindi Yaka (Chapter X, invocation No. XVIII) and soon he fell back and was supported for a few seconds, but revived almost immediately, when he became possessed by Bilindi Yaka. An axe was given him by one of the Veddas with which he hit the coconut so as to split it, letting the water pour out on the ground. Then with a half coconut in each hand he danced up to Vela shouting "Houh! houh!" and held the nuts against his chest while with head bent and body swaying he said, "You have offered me coconut, and I have come, why did you call me?" For coconut, instead of the usual word *pol* he used *sudu ena*, literally "the white one" or "the white thing." Again he danced round the pot and bent his head low over it, in this way showing his satisfaction with the offering. Whilst he continued to dance Vela and Kaira made the coconut milk, putting the remains of the flesh of the nut on the pots of rice which had been placed on the *maessa*. Handuna now took the arrow blade from the *kirikoraha* and danced with it, holding its ends in either hand and twirling it round between his fingers; taking it in his right hand, he stabbed sharply at the pot as he danced round it, taking care, however, never to hit the pot. He dipped the arrow into the pot and examined the milk on the

blade, then scattered it to show that he was pleased, shouting 796
several times *Has Bilindi! Has Bilindi!* to which Kaira always 535
answered *diwas* or "Lord." He danced again, stretching alternately 787
his right and left arms, and about this time Bilindi Yaka left and Kande Yaka entered him without any outward signs, so that we did not recognize the change which had taken place until presently he danced round the *kirikoraha* with one arm extended and holding the arrow blade by its centre. We were told that he was possessed by Kande Yaka, who in his person performed the traditional pantomime of tracking the sambur by its slots, pointing at them with the arrow. This scene was not acted so thoroughly as it was at Bendiyagalge. Handuna picked up a few leaves and held them across the arrow to represent a bow whilst he crouched in a position ready to shoot; then, dipping his hand in the *kirikoraha* he dropped some milk on the leaves and got up and danced. Filling the palms of his hands with the milk he went to Kaira and said: "The sambur you shall shoot shall bleed like this milk dripping." Coming to one of us he placed one arm on his shoulder, holding a betel leaf moist with milk in the other outstretched hand, and prophesied sambur to the bow of Kaira. With head slightly thrown back and rapt expression he told of Indigollae and the seven pots of blood—and now it seemed that Kande Yaka went and Indigollae Yaka came[1]. Before going back to the *kirikoraha* Handuna gave one of us (C.G.S.) a betel leaf as a sign of favour, and then taking another from the *kirikoraha* he allowed some milk to drip over it before he let it fall to the ground. Then with the arrow head he made two slits in the leaf not quite extending to the base, and again dipped it in the milk. Next he went to Vela and passed the slit leaf slowly over his head and finally slapped it on his chest. He did the same thing to Kaira with an uncut leaf, and it was noted that when the leaves fell to the ground off the men's chests they were picked up carefully and put in the *kirikoraha*. The cuts in the leaf denoted that the sambur promised to Vela would be horned. The manner in which the leaf falls is also considered prophetic; when, as in this case, it falls with its

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[1] His invocation is given in Chapter x, No. xxxii.

796 under surface upwards, the quarry will take long to kill; if, on
the other hand, the leaf fall with its upper surface upwards,
535 death will be speedy.

787 After this Handuna again danced round the *kirikoraha*, holding the arrow in it, and showed his favour to each of the male onlookers by passing a milky betel leaf over their heads and placing it on their chests. This was repeated several times alternating with dances and quiverings over the pot before Handuna finally shook his head over the pot and fell back with a shout, the *yaka* having left him.

Now Indigollae Yakini, the wife of Indigollae Yaka, was invoked, and we were told that Kaira who performed this dance would have worn beads on his wrists had he possessed them. He danced in the usual way round the *kirikoraha* with the arrow head which transfixed a betel leaf in one hand, when suddenly dropping his head over the *kirikoraha* he shouted and apparently became possessed by the *yakini*. Gasping and shaking he went to both Handuna and Vela and put milky betel leaves on their chests, and spoke to them, raising his arms alternately and shuffling his feet. He returned to the pot and danced, stretching his arms and then crossing them across his body as he would have done had he been holding a couple of *aude*, swaying his body and moving vigorously. Several times he bent over the *kirikoraha* and each time leapt back with a shout and danced again. At last Handuna pointed to the offering of rice on the *maesa*, which he approached and inspected while gasping and shaking, then evidently satisfied with this he sprang forward to the *kirikoraha*, dropped his head over it and fell back exhausted, but no longer possessed by any *yaka*.

The Kirikoraha at Uniche. The *kirikoraha* performed at Maha Oya by Wannaku of Uniche seemed to be intermediate between the ceremony of the wilder Veddas where the original idea, namely Kande Yaka tracking the elk, was the dominant feature, and that danced by the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula where this *motif* was omitted.

A *maesa* was built (though not elaborated into a *bulutyahana* as at Unuwatura Bubula), a white cloth was laid over it and betel leaves, areca nuts, bananas, coconuts, and two pots of

cooked rice were placed on it, as well as the *kirikoraha* itself 796
containing the coconut milk, in which two *aude* had been 535
placed. All these offerings were then covered with a red cloth, 787
the red colour being said to be necessary.

Before describing the dance it must be explained that the Uniche Veddas had come to Maha Oya, some twenty-four miles from their home, and the shaman had not brought his *aude* with him, so we offered to lend him two, a small one we had collected at Unuwatura Bubula, and a particularly fine one lent to us by Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, the Sinhalese headman already referred to, who in his youth had lived a great deal among Veddas, and from whom he had received the *aude*. This *aude*, evidently an old one, pleased Wannaku greatly and he exclaimed with joy: "This is indeed an *aude* for Kande Yaka[1]." We did not tell him whence we had obtained them, but he seemed impressed that a white man should possess such a good Vedda *aude*.

Wannaku put on the *hangala* and salaamed to the *maesa*, and whilst the drum was beaten sang the invocation given in Chapter X, No. XXII, to Bilindi Yaka. He danced in front of the *maesa* facing east, slowly at first, but gradually he began to sway his body more rapidly and with greater vigour and soon became possessed by Bilindi Yaka. The shaman now picked up the large *aude* and, after dancing with it in his hands for a few seconds, flung it from him to the ground with disgust, exclaiming angrily: "This is not my arrow, this has been used by a Sinhalese." Someone handed him the small *aude* and he seemed satisfied and danced with this. Of course it was quite possible for Wannaku to have discovered the history of the *aude* from our servants or from the villagers, or it may even have been mentioned quite casually in conversation with them and not have made much impression on him at the time, but flashing into consciousness in the excitement of the dance it may have appeared an important and till then unknown fact. On questioning Wannaku after the dance he denied any previous knowledge but said quite simply that he was possessed

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[1] However, when the dance took place the next day he used this *aude* when invoking Bilindi Yaka.

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by Bilindi Yaka and "as a man knows his own betel pouch so Bilindi Yaka would know his own *aude*."

The shaman bent his head over the *kirikoraha* and inspected it, then putting his hand into it he scattered the milk on the ground two or three times, before filling his palm with milk and letting it fall over the *aude*, in this way testing the quality of the offering. With the arrow in one hand he stood in front of the *maessa* shaking and shouting. Now he took a betel leaf from the *kirikoraha*, fixed it on the point of the *aude* and as a sign of favour put this on an old Vedda's chest, asking at the same time why he had been invoked: "Is anyone sick?" The old man replied that no one was ill, they had merely called him to take the offerings on the *maessa*. So the *yaka* was pleased and with rapt expression the shaman danced, and again dripped milk over the *aude*, saying at the same time that he must go. He repeated this several times, all the while quivering and gasping and saying that now he would leave, but before finally departing the spirit again showed favour to the old Vedda, influencing the shaman to put a milky betel leaf on his chest; then the shaman leapt back suddenly and the *yaka* left him.

After a short interval the shaman danced again and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he called by the invocation No. XVII; soon he made signs that he wanted something, when the Veddas understood that he lacked a second *aude*, and not having another, one of the Veddas gave him a knife, which the shaman preferred to the rejected *aude*. He held the *aude* and the knife crosswise, these now representing the bow and arrow of Kande Yaka, and dancing wildly the shaman feigned to test the imaginary bow, then leaning both arms on the *maessa* he shivered and shook, at the same time declaring that the bow was a strong and good one. Again holding the arrow blade and knife like a bow and arrow he followed the track of an imaginary sambar for a few yards; he pointed to a spot on the ground and said the next *kirikoraha* should be built there. Then taking some milk from the *kirikoraha* he let some fall on the arrow and spilled some on the ground, and we were told that this represented Kande Wanniya

drinking after the kill. After a little more dancing the shaman 796
fell back into the arms of his supporter and the spirit left him. 535

The Kirikoraha at Unuwatura Bubula. When dancing
to Kande Yaka at Unuwatura Bubula the Veddas made a 787
bulatyahana (Plate XXXV); this, we were told, would be built when invoking many *yaka*, but the *kirikoraha* would never be danced without it. The *bulatyahana* seemed to be an elaborated *maessa* with the framework carried up to form a back and slanting roof over which a cloth, specially kept for this purpose, was hung and fastened down. On the shelf of the *bulatyahana* two *aude* and a trident of the ordinary Hindu pattern were placed together with betel leaves and areca nut. The *kirikoraha* containing coconut milk and betel leaves stood on a rice-mortar beside it and a pot of cooked rice was put on the ground.

The shaman danced in front of the *bulatyahana* holding in his hands a new piece of cloth (a coloured handkerchief which we gave him) specially obtained for the purpose. He swayed his body and raised the cloth to his head while lifting his feet and patting the ground alternately with his right and left foot, but not moving from the front of the *bulatyahana*, that is to say confining his dancing to a space three or four feet long. He exchanged the handkerchief for the trident and placing a betel leaf on the point he danced with this and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka. Putting his hands into the *kirikoraha*, he examined the milk and expressed his satisfaction by shouting and clapping his hands. Again he danced to and fro in front of the *bulatyahana* with the trident in his hand. The *kirikoraha* was taken off the rice-mortar and put on the *bulatyahana*, and the pot of cooked rice was put in its place on the rice-mortar.

The dancer then approached a sick shaman who, as men- 755
tioned on p. 263, had coughed up a considerable amount of blood at the end of the *alutyakagama* ceremony performed previously, and fed him with some rice which he brought to him in a betel leaf. In this way Kande Yaka showed his benevolence towards the sick man, for it was considered that the *yaka* food would cure him. Returning to the *bulatyahana* the shaman quivered and shook his head and examined the

796 535 787 rice, then he came to us and in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaka* said that he had come because we had asked for him. After some more dancing a little longer in front of the *Aukgaikena* and after much bending and shaking over it and the rice pot the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya left the shaman and the ceremony ended.

NAE YAKU CEREMONIES

769 535 The large part the *Nae Yaku* play in the life of the Veddas and the great deference paid to them have been treated in the chapters on religion. We witnessed two *Nae Yaku* ceremonies which took place at Sitala Wanniya and Bandaraduwa respectively. The Bandaraduwa ceremony was performed on the seventh day after the death of the individual whose spirit was invoked, and we were allowed to prepare a dancing ground in the jungle, where it seemed that a tolerably good series of photographs might be obtained. However, the Veddas were obviously apprehensive of the spirit of the deceased until the ceremony had taken place, and insisted on performing it early in the morning with the result that the photographs obtained were all underexposed. We have however thought it best to publish a number of these without retouching them, an exception being made in the case of the two photographs reproduced in Plates XXXVI, fig. 2, and XXXVIII, fig. 1, the value of which do not depend on the facial expression of the performers while they were so underexposed that all detail would have been lost in a reproduction.

The ceremony performed at Sitala Wanniya was danced expressly because we wished to see it, but Handuna, the most important man in this community, was delighted when we suggested that they should dance to the *Nae Yaku*, because he said it would please the *yaku*, for when alone the community could seldom provide such good things to offer them as we promised to give.

Nae Yaku Ceremony at Sitala Wanniya. Although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas told us that the *Nae Yaku* could not come without Kande Yaka, Kande Yaka was not invoked at

Plate XXXV

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Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the *bulatyahana* (Unuvatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman before the *bulatyahana* (Unuvatura Bubula)

[facing p. 230]

the *Nae Yaku* ceremony that they performed for our benefit; 769
the spirits of certain named relatives being called upon immediately. 535
This may have been an omission caused by the ceremony having been begun in the spirit of a rehearsal (though it was certainly continued in earnest), but it seems more probable to us that this was not a mistake, as it was clearly stated that when a *Nae Yaku* is invoked for the first time after a death Kande Yaka is called upon at the beginning of the ceremony to bring the new *yaka*. The two *yaku* invoked at this ceremony were remembered by the community as influential men, and had probably been invoked frequently, and thus though still looked upon as attendants of Kande Yaka in a general way, they had probably gained a certain independence. Two pots of rice were cooked with coconut milk and placed on the *maessa* which was already in existence, having been built for one of the other dances, and an earthenware bowl of coconut milk was supported on a stake driven into the ground in the centre of the dancing plot. This bowl, the *kirikoraha*, was filled with coconut milk, and betel leaves were put in it. Kaira put on a hangala, and held a piece of cloth in his hands. It was decided that the father-in-law of Handuna should be called, therefore an invocation was sung to him, and Kaira danced with the piece of cloth in his hand holding it at times over his head, and soon began to shout and leap showing that he was possessed. He went to Handuna, shouted and waved his cloth before him, and he too fell back and became possessed. There seemed to be no doubt that both Handuna and Kaira were considered to be possessed by the same *yaka*, i.e. by the spirit of the former's father-in-law Tuta Gamarale. Both bent their heads low over the *kirikoraha* and inspected the milk, then examined the offering of cooked rice, and returned to the *kirikoraha* quivering and gasping, and scattered some of the milk as a sign of pleasure. Then Kaira spoke to Vela in the low gasping voice of the *yaka* and stretched his arms towards Vela's child, who was suffering from yaws, and covered both the child and its mother with his cloth. He treated the other children in the same way, and also sprinkled coconut milk on their heads, and in the hurried *yaka* manner of one possessed smeared their faces with the milk, and we were told

769 that this was the manner in which the *yaka* of Tuta Gamarale usually showed favour to his grandchildren. 535 Handuna and Kaira both returned to the *kirikoraha*, and shivering and quaking they bent their heads over it, shaking their hair over their faces, then both danced wildly (Handuna with an arrow in his hand), scattering the milk about, in this way showing their satisfaction with the offerings prepared for them. Both Handuna and Kaira went to several of the Vedda onlookers, and waving their cloths promised luck in hunting or favour of some kind. Then coming to each of us, they said while shuffling their feet and shaking their cloths "My grandchildren called me to help them, now you are here too, do you help them also." After feeding some of the small children with coconut milk they both returned to the *kirikoraha* and bent their heads low over it, crying, "Oh," and fell back, and the *yaka* of Tuta Gamarale left them.

A good deal of discussion followed among the Veddas, as many considered that the father of Handuna should be invoked, but all declared they were too tired to dance. At last Handuna prevailed upon his son-in-law Kaira to dance, explaining to us that they seldom had such good food as that which they were able to offer to-day and it pleased the *yaku* greatly, so his father should be called to share it.

So Kaira took the handkerchief and danced again, soon becoming possessed by Huda the father of Handuna. After showing favour to the progeny of Huda as before by holding the cloth over their heads he fell supine into the arms of Vela and it seemed as if the *yaka* was about to depart. Some of the men and boys began immediately to repeat the invocation to prevent this from happening, and after some seconds of immobility Kaira began to tremble slightly, and raised his right hand limply, let it fall again, and once more became inert. Then all joined vigorously in the invocation, and the wife of Kaira smeared his face with coconut milk, and with the aid of a leaf-cone fed him with the milk, that is to say, she managed to convey a few drops into his mouth, but still he remained unmoved. As this was ineffectual several of the grandchildren of the man whose spirit possessed Kaira fed the latter in the same way;

769 535 Vela did so also, with the result that Kaira dropped his head forward, shook violently and nodded his head sideways in a clumsy drunken fashion, and in a few seconds, still supported, jerked his limbs forwards and moved to the offering, after which he came back to where the women were standing and fell again into the arms of Vela. His chin was thrown back and his whole body trembled, while he gasped a word or two occasionally and fanned himself with his cloth vigorously. He held the cloth over the child suffering from yaws and promised to cure him, then putting both hands on Handuna he let his head fall on the latter's chest, and while trembling and shuffling his feet asked how Handuna fared. Handuna replied that game was scarce, and Kaira then spoke to the wife of Handuna and again to Handuna, and promised help. Then leaving Handuna he danced with wild leaping steps round the *kirikoraha* and gasped that now he must go and so leapt to the *massa*, bent his head over the offering, and fell back exhausted. But he soon began to dance again, twirling the arrow blade between his fingers, till after a short time he returned to the *massa*, and again bent his head over the offering; then with a great shout he took the pot of rice in both hands and spun it on the ground, and as he did so the *yaka* left him and he fell back.

769 787 Spinning the pot had the same significance here as at Henebedda, the direction towards which the pot dipped showing where game would be found. In this instance the pot was so full of rice that it did not dip at all, but this was considered a good omen as game might be expected on all sides.

769 After all was over Handuna took an arrow, and standing by the *massa* pointed the arrow to the pots, and called upon all the *Nae Yaku* to feed. The pots were soon removed, the rice they contained was eaten, and the betel leaves from the *kirikoraha* chewed, but the milk in the *kirikoraha* was poured over a heap of twigs laid on the ground, being thus devoted to the *yaku*.

177 769 **Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa.** Some account has already been given in Chapter II of the abnormal conditions prevailing at Bandaraduwa, so it will only be necessary to touch lightly upon this subject here. Some twenty years back these Kovil Vanamai Veddas, of whom the Bandaraduwa Veddas

177 are the remains, lived much the same life as the Henebedda Veddas now live, and like them were in transition between
769 a purely hunting, honey-collecting life and the settled condition of the village Veddas who are mainly dependent on their chena produce. When we visited Bandaraduwa the Veddas were in a sorry condition and had settled down among the Sinhalese. It is true they dwelt in separate huts, but they were built on the same chena which had been allotted by the Government to them all, and like the Sinhalese they were paying taxes[1]. Naturally living in such close contact with the Sinhalese they have been influenced by them, and intermarriage has taken place, so that in many cases the Vedda identity has been lost. However, those of them who still considered themselves Veddas have retained a number of their old songs and many of their old customs, as comparison with the uncontaminated Sitala Wanniya Veddas showed. But even these customs, though Vedda at root, had been largely coloured and often overlaid by Sinhalese beliefs, so that when a death occurred not only was it necessary to make offering to the new Nae Yaka but it was equally important to propitiate the nearest Buddhist priest.

A *kirikoraha* was prepared in the usual way, and betel
769 leaves put in it as well as the coconut milk. The shaman
535 Tissahami, wearing a *hangala*, placed two *aude* on the *kirikoraha* and salaamed to the bowl. (Plate XXXVI, fig. 1.) Then he began to dance in the usual manner to the accompaniment of a drum played by a Vedda lad, first holding one *aude* and then one in each hand, that in the right hand being for Kande Yaka and that in the left for the *yaka* of the deceased Tuta. The use of the drum, which was of Sinhalese manufacture, must be regarded as an innovation, for although these people used them, and the Bendiyagalge people said they would if they had them,
[177] the Sitala Wanniya Veddas declared that true Veddas never possessed or used a drum[2].

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[1] It must be remembered that about sixty years ago Bailey, a Government official, encouraged the Veddas of Nilgala to make chena and since then the custom has spread. Sixty years ago these Veddas, and in fact all except the long established coast and village Veddas, must have lived a life very little different from that of the Sitala Wanniya group of to-day.

[2] The readiness with which this community accepted an innovation was demonstrated

Plate XXXVI

769
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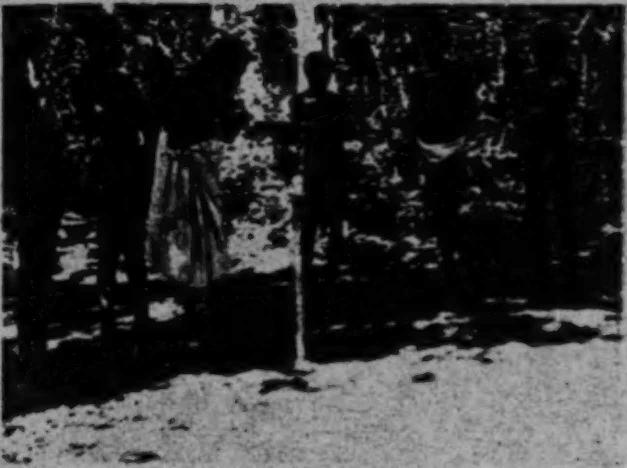

Fig. 1. Nae Yaka ceremony, the shaman salaams to the offering
(Bandaradewa)

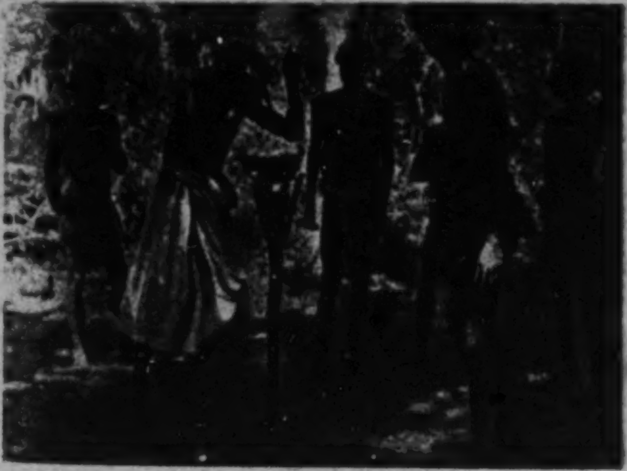

Fig. 2. Nae Yaka ceremony, the shaman pretends to stab the offering
(Bandaradewa)"

[facing p. 234a]

769
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Plate XXXVII

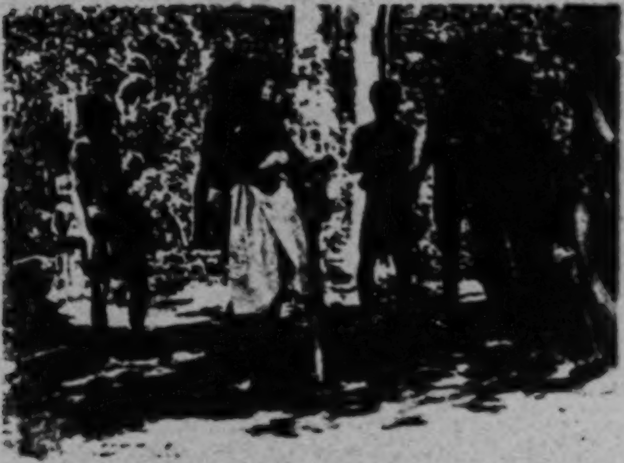

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed falls into the arms of a supporter (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman sprinkles milk from the offering on the brothers of the deceased (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 234 k]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911

AE5 Vedda AE5

Plate XXXVIII

769
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Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka tracks the sambar (Bandaradenia)"

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the brother of the deceased falls back possessed (Bandaradenia)

[facing p. 234 c]

At the same time an invocation was sung, presumably to 769
Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaka*, but our notes are not quite clear 535
about this; it was however certain that Kande Yaka, Bilindi 787
Yaka and the *Nae Yaka* all came, indeed that the last was unable to come without Kande Yaka, but it was not clear when each *yaka* came and went, and it seemed quite possible for the shaman to be possessed by several *yaku* at once.

As the shaman danced he stabbed at the *kirikoraha* with both the *aude* (Plate XXXVI, fig. 2), in this way the *Nae Yaka* by whom he was possessed was pleased to show his power. Sometimes as Tissahami made the usual half turn on his heels he held the *aude* against his hips pointed end outwards. Soon he began to quiver and bend his head forward, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers, into whose arms he fell back (Plate XXXVII, fig. 1). After lying still for a few seconds he revived and began to dance wildly, stabbing the *aude* in the air; this was in order to frighten people, for although the feeling of the *Nae Yaka* towards his living relatives was friendly, provided always that he had been well treated by them and had been offered sufficient rice, coconut milk and betel leaves, the *yaka* was not averse to showing his newly acquired power. After this, in order to show his favour to his relatives the shaman went to both the brothers of the dead man in turn and sprinkled them with coconut milk from the *kirikoraha* (Plate XXXVII, fig. 2), he put his arms on their shoulders and promised them luck in hunting, and taking two betel leaves from the *kirikoraha* he put one on the chest of each man, and the leaves being wet with the milk stayed where they were placed for a short time. Suddenly leaping away the shaman, now apparently possessed by Kande Yaka and probably with the spirit of the *Nae Yaka* still within him, tracked an imaginary sambar round the dancing ground, holding the two *aude* crosswise to represent a bow and arrow. This is shown in Plate XXXVIII, fig. 1, which also shows the betel leaves on the chest

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by the shaman who wanted to wear Sinhalese leggings with bells, although he said these had not been worn before in a Vedda ceremony. The leglets, which he greatly admired, had been worn by a peasant Sinhalese at a devil ceremony which had been held two days before at a village a few miles distant.

769 of each of the two brothers of the deceased. The shaman made 535 no feint to shoot but soon put the *aude* on the *kirikoraha*, and 787 taking a pot of rice which had been prepared twirled it vigorously in his hands, and though this may have represented Kande Wanniya spinning the rice pot for prophecy, the shaman put the pot down without actually spinning it. Supported by one of the Veddas he again danced round the *kirikoraha* and swayed his body violently; at times he would spring suddenly to one side stabbing fiercely at the air, after which (bending over the *kirikoraha*) he fell back and remained perfectly still with rapt expression and head slightly bent, one hand resting on the edge of the milk pot. It seemed as though the Yaka was about to leave the shaman, but as the relatives did not desire this (perhaps because the Yaka had not yet fed them as a sign of greater favour) they all sang the invocation together. The Yaka heard them, for suddenly the shaman began to tremble, the trembling grew to a vigorous shaking, and he sprang forward and again bent his head over the *kirikoraha*; then with body bent and head drooping he moved a little way, taking short leaping steps, and again fell back exhausted. But he soon revived and took the *aude* and approached the dead man's brothers in turn, who both became possessed by the *Nae Yaka* and fell back. Then the shaman smeared their bodies with coconut milk, throwing some into their mouths, and they soon showed signs of life again. Plate XXXVIII, fig. 2, and Plate XXXIX, fig. 1, show the two brothers of the deceased possessed by the *Nae Yaka*; in the latter figure the body of the unconscious man has been smeared with the contents of the *kirikoraha*, while the remains of that with which he had been fed hangs about his mouth and chin. It will be observed that in both these figures the supporters are Sinhalese; this was because there were not enough grown Vedda men in the community to support the men possessed by Yaku. All this time the invocation was being repeated by one of the youngest Veddas present, who we were told was the dead man's sister's son, that is the dead man's potential son-in-law. The shaman now fed the dead man's brothers with rice from the offering, and then fell exhausted to the ground. One of the onlookers immediately came

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
[illegible] Vedda [illegible]

Plate XXXIX

769
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787

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the other brother of the deceased is also possessed (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Nae Yaku embraces the brothers of the deceased (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p.236a]

Plate XL

769
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787

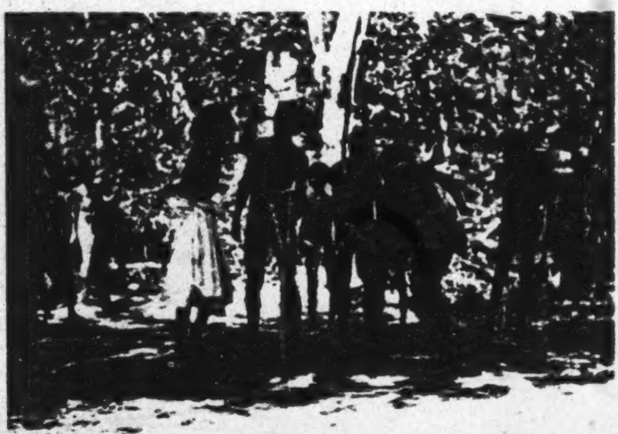

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the Nae Yaka shows his power (Bandaraduwa)

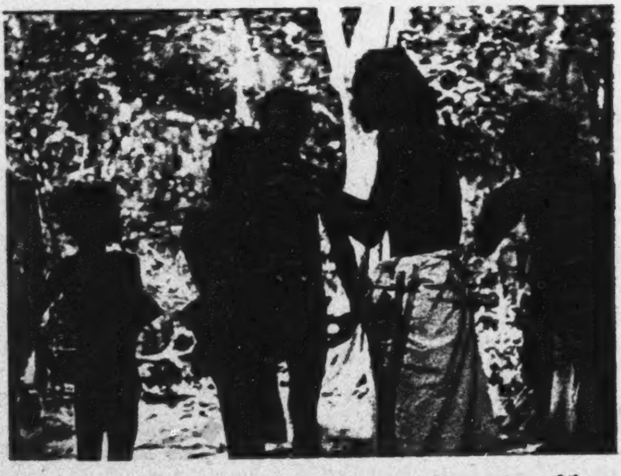

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman feeds the members of the community (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 236b]

to his assistance when he began to quiver and sway, then 769
moved and put both arms round one of the dead man's brothers 535
as a sign of kindness from the deceased. (Plate XXXIX, 787
fig. 2.) The brothers said: "It was good of you to come. See we have given you food, now do not come back again," and the *yaka* agreed. The shaman then took the *aude* and transfixed a betel leaf with each and danced and again showed favour to the relatives by giving them each another betel leaf, after which one of the relatives danced, but the shaman threatened to stab with the *aude* the men who were not relatives of the dead man. (Plate XL, fig. 1.) Soon both the shaman and the two brothers fell back and the Yaka departed from them. When the shaman revived, he bent his head over the *kirikoraha* as a sign of respect; then holding both hands over the rice pot he repeated a silent charm, asking any of the other *yaku* who might have come to the ceremony to depart peacefully. After this he fed each relative of the dead man, holding the *kirikoraha* to their mouths, as is shown in Plate XL, fig. 2.

THE INVOCATION OF BAMBURA YAKA.

The Veddas invoke Bambura Yaka for help in getting pig 776
and yams, both staple foods, the latter being an extremely im- 535
portant element in their diet. The dance is pantomimic, and 773
depicts a boar hunt in which Bambura, the boar-hunting hero, 796
was aided by a Vedda woman, who killed the pig with an arrow she shot from her husband's bow and whose spirit is therefore called Dunne Yakini (Bow Spirit), while the spirit of this woman's husband who turned the boar with his yam stick (*ule*) has become Ule Yaka, that is (Yam-stick Spirit). This ceremony, though not so widely spread, is as dramatic as that in which Kande Yaka stalks and kills sambar deer. We saw it danced by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya and by Wannaku of Uniche.

The invocation of Bambura Yaka at Sitala Wanniya. 776
The dance at Sitala Wanniya will be described first, since the 773
story was told us here in its more complete form. Once long 796
ago many Vedda men and women went out in search of yams,

776 773 796 and they took their dogs with them. While all were busy digging yams, the dogs strayed in the jungle and soon put up a boar, to which they gave chase, giving tongue. The men hearing the dogs followed them and soon came up with the boar at bay, which immediately charged them. None of the men could kill the boar, but a woman, whose spirit afterwards became Dunne Yakini, picked up a bow and arrow and killed the boar with the help of her husband Ule Yaka and his brother, who became Kuda Ule Yaka, i.e. Little Yam-stick Yaka. Although Bambura Yaka takes no part in the story as it was told us, he is the important *yaka* of the ceremony; it is he who is especially invoked, Dunne Yakini, her husband and brother-in-law coming in as his attendants, as do a varying number of other *yaku*, presumably the spirits of those who joined in the boar hunt[1].

535 796 During the dance Bambura Yaka and all his attendants were present, so that it was not at all clear which part of the dance represented the actions of Bambura Yaka himself, since after the first complete possession *yaku* entered and departed from the shaman without any obvious signs. But we were told after the dance that Bambura was returning to his cave at Lewangala carrying yams and a couple of the large monitor lizards when he came across the hunt.

The properties for this dance are rather complicated and were carefully prepared on the dancing ground, all the men helping in the work and charms being sung the while. The necessary sticks were cut and two flat reddish stones found by a stream were placed below the *maesa* which was built with a double platform, a bundle of grass, leaves and twigs bound together to represent the boar being suspended from the lower platform. The stones were called Kuda Lewangala and Maha Lewangala respectively, and represented the red rocks or rocky hills of Lewangala, the unknown land in which Bambura lived and which is still the chief abiding place of his *yaka*. The majority of these properties are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1.

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[1] We may here refer to a matter we discuss at greater length in Chapter x. It is certain that the invocations (Nos. XXVII and XXVIII) used at the Bambura Yaka ceremony and specially addressed to Bambura, which were only partially understood by those who sang them, originally applied to honey collecting.

On the stones Handuna and Kaira mixed their pigments, lime, turmeric, water and charcoal, while all chanting together they decorated with spots and bars the various sticks which were to form the bows, arrows, yam sticks and carrying sticks sacred to the *yaku* who were soon to be invoked[1].

As already stated the boar was suspended below the *maesa* by a creeper, and another creeper fastened to the "boar" was held by a small boy who stood a little back in the bush.

The objects prepared for the Bambura Yaka dance at Sitala Wanniya were as follows:

(i) The *mulpola itiya*; the meaning of these words is doubtful, though *itiya* was said to signify an ancient weapon. This was said to be for the use of Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and is a rough stick about 5 feet 6 in. long (figure 9 *a*) pointed at one end, above which the bark is shaved off for about 6 in., which part was decorated with bars of red and black pigment. This was said to be a yam stick, and it was explained that because of this the bark was not peeled except at the point, for a man would cut any stick in the jungle and dig up yams with it.

(ii) The *ule* (figure 9 *b*) or ceremonial arrow belonging to the Yaka is a peeled stick about 6 feet long, pointed at one end and decorated with rings of red and black pigment. Three pieces of bast are tied to the upper end, a few inches from the top, to epresent the feathers of an arrow.

(iii) The *harimitiya* is a stout stick about 3 feet 6 in. ong, decorated with rings of red and black pigment, and was sed by Bambura Yaka as a staff.

(iv) The *haelapeta* (figure 9 *c*) is a peeled stick nearly 6 feet long, spatulate at one end and decorated with bars of red nd black in the manner indicated in the drawing.

(v) The *ran kaduwa* (literally "golden sword") is similar o the *haelapeta*, and totally unlike the *ran kaduwa* used in the Rahu Yaku ceremony and figured on p. 256.

(vi) The bow of the Dunne Yakini has the bark stripped rom the outer surfaces only, and is decorated with spots of red

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[1] On asking the reason for this ornamentation of the properties we were told that e *yaku* would be pleased when they saw the decorations, for the spots of pigment presented the flowers of Lewangala.

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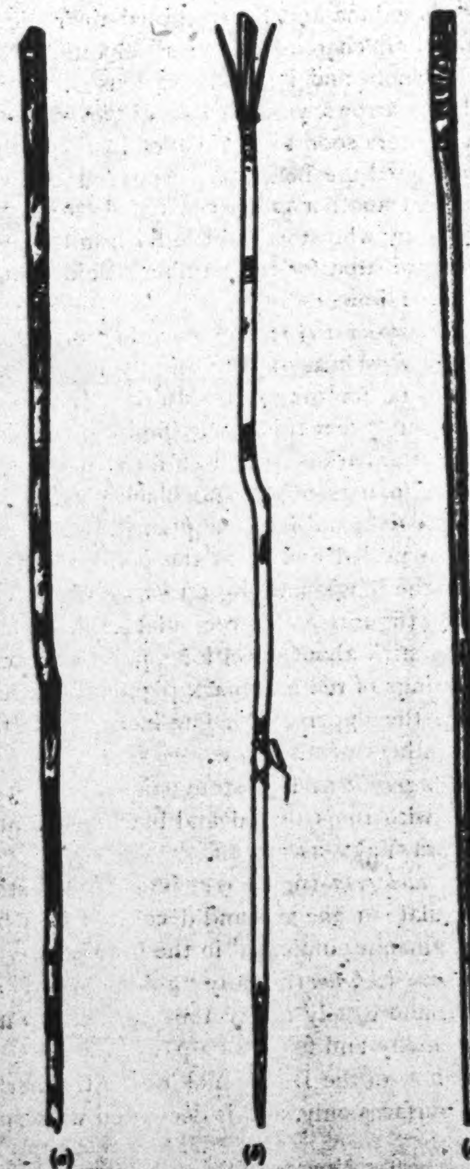

Fig. 9. Some of the objects used in the Bambura Yaka ceremony.
(a) *Maitpola kitya* $\times \frac{1}{10}$. (b) *Ula* $\times \frac{1}{10}$. (c) *Hendapota* $\times \frac{1}{10}$.

nd black pigment. It closely resembled that used in the ambura Yaka ceremony at Uniche.

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(vii) The *tadiya* is well seen in Plate XLI, fig. 1. It is short stout stick, and represents a carrying stick or *pingo* which s used throughout Ceylon; however, it was quite unlike one, s these are long and springy and resemble a bow; moreover, eddas usually unstring their bows and use them as carrying ticks.

(viii) The *nimiti* or book (explained as book of omens, nd said to be borrowed from Sinhalese ceremonies) was made f a couple of broad strips of bark in imitation of the *ola* books sed in Ceylon[1].

[787]
[177]

The *haelapeta* and *ran kaduwa* were said to belong to Devatayo of those names, but nothing was known about them. Devatayo or Dewa are Sinhalese spirits distinct from the *yaku* ccording to Sinhalese beliefs, but Handuna, our best informant t Sitala Wanniya, said Devatayo were the same as *yaku*. Obviously they had been introduced and assimilated to the Vedda *yaku*.

After all the sticks had been painted some cooked yams vere tied up in leaves and bound to one end of the *tadiya*, and ome wisps of grass were tied to the other to represent monitor lizards (Plate XLI, fig. 1), the whole was then put on the lower tage of the *maesa* with cooked yams for all the *yaku*, while portion of yams was placed on the upper stage for Koriminaala Yaka, but no reason could be discovered why his food was kept part from the rest. The dance began by Handuna singing an nvocation (No. XXIX) to Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and Kaira, who wore a *hangala*, held the *mulpola itiya* in his right hand, letting the decorated end rest in his left, then he danced slowly round and round in front of the *maesa* facing east, the direction whence the boar of the story came. The *mulpola itiya* was soon changed for the *ran kaduwa*, and now Kaira made long leaping steps, widening his circle as he moved in front of the *maesa* and turning the stick over in his hand. At this time he becam possessed by Ule Yaka, and after dancing in a circle for a fe minutes he began to leap to and fro in front of the *maesa* an thrust at the ground with his stick, at the same time warnin the *yaku* that the boar he was hunting was very dangerous an that they must be prepared to help him should it charge hi Then he approached Handuna and one of us, saying "The boa is very fierce but I will kill it." Again he went to Handun and laid the *ran kaduwa* across the latter's chest and held it t him with both arms and repeated his boast of killing the boar but he also begged for assistance if he should meet with a accident. He again leapt to and fro beating his sides, and taking the *tadiya* from the *maesa*, held it first on his shoulde then behind his head and brandished it in the air so tha Bambura Yaka might see the good things attached to it, and i he were pleased with the offering he too might come to assis Ule Yaka if the boar should attack him. Then taking Vela b the hand, he spoke to him quietly and pointed as though he saw the boar, and crouching, he stepped forward noiselessly but again sprang back and danced with the *ule* and *tadiya*, the putting the *tadiya* down, turned the *ule* over in his hands and danced with long leaping strides. Soon he left off dancin and merely bounded to and fro trying to thrust at the "boar" below the *maesa*, but the small boy holding the creeper attache to it pulled the "boar" away each time Kaira thrust at it. Afte a few attempts he came to each of us in turn, pressing the *ul* against our chests, and with head bent forward and taking short steps alternately to the right and left he spoke to us as though we were Bambura Yaka and said, "This boar is difficul to kill, grant that I may succeed." As he spoke he raised hi hand and pointed. Then shouting *usi usi nam* (the words wit which dogs are put on a trail) he called the dogs (mentioned i the story) Sanjala, Bahira Pandi, Neti, and Kali, and wen through the pantomime of laying them on the trail, gasping and panting the while and hitting his chest saying, "This is a fine big boar and I will kill it." Again he leapt to and fro and thrust at the "boar" without success, then with a great charg and a shout wounded the "boar" and fell back exhausted in

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[1] The *nimiti* omen or book is perhaps the most curious of all the properties. was said that Bambura Yaka could read and write, and that he was the only Yaka had these accomplishments, though nothing was known as to how he had learned . But certainly this part of the ritual was old and must be the result of quite cient contact with a Buddhistic people.

Plate XLI

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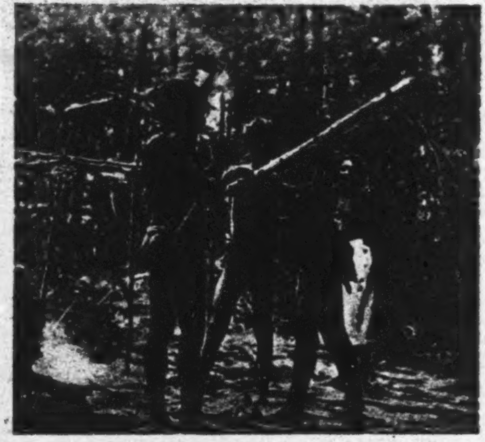

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, preparing the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[417]

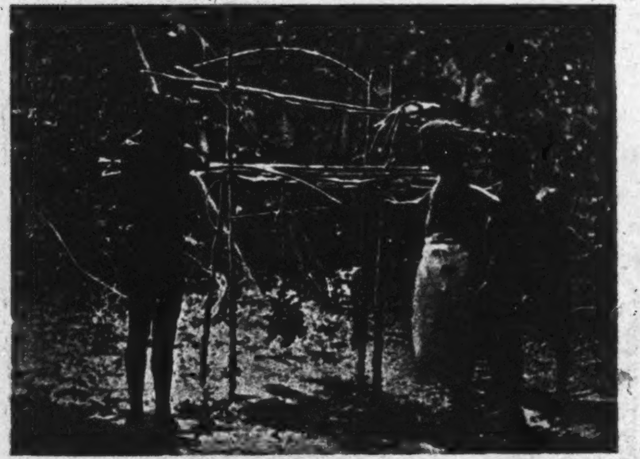

Fig. 2. The Bambura Yaka ceremony begins by Handuna singing an invocation (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 a]

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Plate XLII

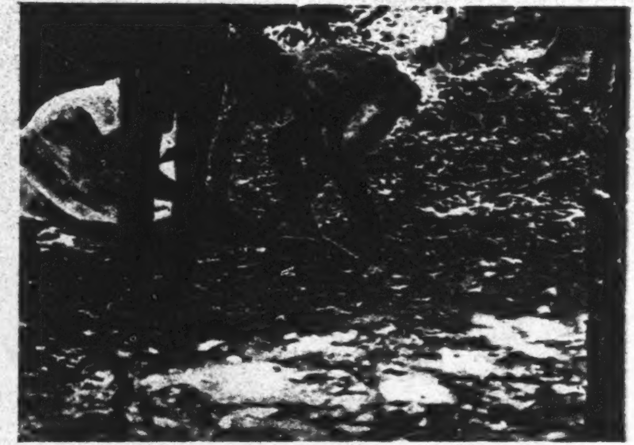

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar wounds the hunter (Sitala Wanniya)*

[917]

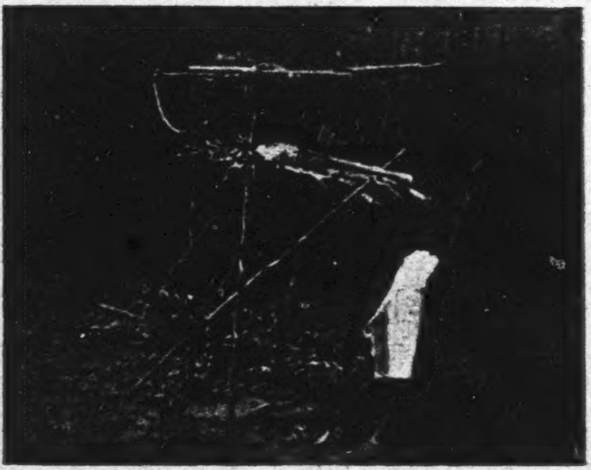

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar is at length killed (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 b]

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Plate XLIII

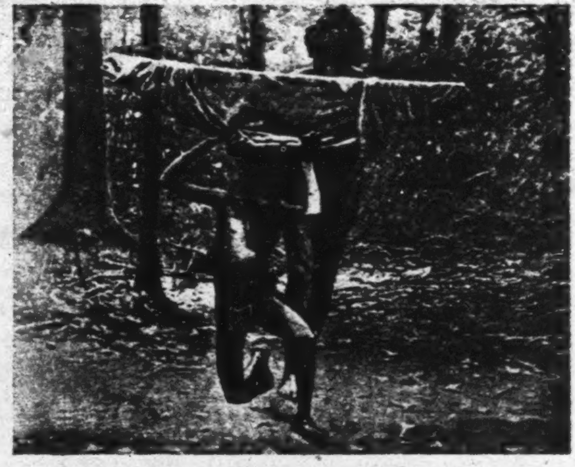

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the bow of Dunne Yakini (Sitala Wanniya)*

[482]

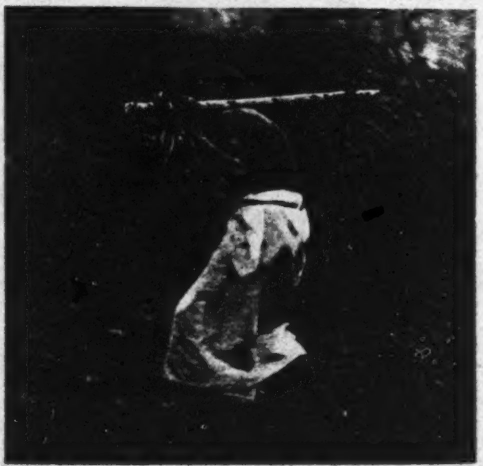

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Kaira dances with the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 c]

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the arms of his supporter. However, the "boar" was not yet dead and the *yaka* did not leave Kaira, who rested for a few seconds, and when he sprang forward with a shout and danced again and spoke to Handuna, saying, "I have succeeded in wounding the boar, now I will kill it" he was still possessed by Ule Yaka. Then the whole pantomime was repeated, the boasts, the attempts to kill the boar, and the laying of the dogs on the scent. At last the "boar" was wounded again, for a squeal was set up by the small boy who manipulated the creeper; then with a final thrust the *yaka* killed it, and as the *ule* was carefully withdrawn the "boar" gave a long dying squeal. Then the yaka left Kaira.

Soon Kaira began to dance again still holding the *ule*, and moving slowly at first but soon more energetically, and now he became possessed by Koriminaala Yaka. He danced as before, calling the dogs in the same way as when he was possessed by Ule Yaka and thrust at the boar in like manner, but this time the boar must have turned on him, as with a grunt "honk, honk," the boar swung forward and Kaira stumbled and then hobbled painfully supporting himself on the *ule*, his right leg dragging stiffly on the ground (Plate XLII, fig. 1).

The other men came forward and "medicined" the leg, that is, while one of them supported Kaira the other took a leaf and hurriedly wiped the limb from the back of the knee downwards. This evidently cured him, and he made another attempt to kill the boar, and was again wounded and again cured in the same way. Then he made one more charge, and the *ule* pierced the back of the "boar," wounding it mortally, and as Kaira fell back exhausted the Yaka left him (Plate XLII, fig. 2). As the *ule* was extracted the dying boar again gave forth a last squeal. After a short rest the ceremonial bow prepared for Dunne Yakini was wrapped in a cloth, and Handuna knelt down and held it on his head with both hands while Kaira and Vela sang an invocation almost certainly to Dunne Yakini, but unfortunately no note was taken of this (Plate XLIII, fig. 1)[1]. Kaira salaamed

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[1] There was some experimenting before Kaira took the bow; the plate shows one of the younger members of the community holding it, but as he was not found satisfactory Handuna took it himself.

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to the bow and said, "Behold this golden bow is brought, covered by a clean cloth," and taking it from Handuna proceeded to dance with it at first holding it behind his head, then bringing it forward unwrapped it, placed it on Handuna's shoulder, and spoke in the usual *yaka* voice. He again danced with the bow and tried the string, and expressed his pleasure by gasping and hitting his chest. Then he put it on the *maesa* and fell exhausted.

Although we have no definite note it seems quite evident that at this time Kaira was possessed by Dunne Yakini.

Kaira then danced with the *harimitiya* taking the usual dance steps but supporting himself with the *harimitiya*, and he soon became possessed by Bambura Yaka. One of the lads now held the *tadiya*, then Kaira made a mock search for it for some minutes before he took it from the child. He danced with it over his shoulder with body bent and the *harimitiya* still in his hand (Plate XLIII, fig. 2). He thus enacted Bambura Yaka returning to the cave with good things on his *tadiya*, and he shouted as every Vedda does when within hearing of home. Seeing the children he seemed to threaten them with his stick, and they ran away laughing; this was repeated several times. He tried to frighten the children away as he did not want them to see the food he had procured. Then he led Vela behind the *maesa*, and pointing and speaking in a whisper with a great air of secrecy told him that if he went to a certain place where "there was high land by a stream" he should find a wild pig and kill it. For pig he used the *yaka* word *hossa dikka*, which apparently means "long snout." He led Handuna in the opposite direction, and speaking with like precaution promised that he should find and kill sambar, using the *yaka* name *gowra magalla*.

He took the book, spoke to Handuna and Vela, and next taking yams from the *maesa* presented some to each of us and to all the Veddas present, for in this way Bambura Yaka showed his good will. All the time he was distributing the yams Kaira hurried, gasped, and trembled. Before Bambura Yaka left him Kaira hit the upper stage of the *maesa* with the *harimitiya*, and shouted "Hoi, hoi," to drive Koriminaala Yaka away. Then he fell back, Handuna took the *tadiya*, and the dance ended. 535 796

All the properties of Bambura Yaka and his attendants were replaced on the *maesa* and some water was sprinkled over them, this we were told being water for them to drink, for as no man eats without drinking afterwards, so the *yaku* require water to drink after food has been offered to them.

Handuna repeated charms over them, saying, "We have given you food and treated you well; if we have made any mistakes excuse us and do no harm to our families or ourselves." The whole ceremony was remarkable for the general feeling of cheerfulness and goodfellowship, jokes were frequently made, and obviously the Veddas had nothing to fear from the *yaku* in the ordinary course of events.

The Bambura Yaka Ceremony at Uniche. The dance to Bambura Yaka performed by Wannaku of Uniche differed only very slightly from that performed at Sitala Wanniya, yet in order to show these differences it will be necessary to describe the dance in detail. Wannaku, who visited us at Maha Oya in the Eastern Province, told us that Bambura Yaka was sometimes called Ala Yaka, i.e. Yam Yaka, as he helped men to find yams.

A *maesa* was built and leaves laid on it over which a white cloth[1] was laid, and on this yams, a coconut, and a pumpkin were placed, while some of the properties of the Bambura Yaka ceremony leaned against the *maesa*. These objects consisted of a roughly made bow decorated with bars of red and black (figure 10 *a*), two ordinary arrows and two long sticks which represented the special arrows of the *yaka*. They are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1, leaning against the *maesa*; a ring of bark is left at the top of each stick, and this is split to represent the feathers of an arrow, the peeled portion of both sticks being decorated with bars of red and yellow pigment. The upper ends of these sticks are pared down so as to represent two flattened surfaces as is shown in figure 10 *b*, which is drawn 535 796 293

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[1] Among the Sinhalese and Tamils it is customary not only to hang a ceiling cloth but even to cover the walls, table and chairs with cloths when receiving an honoured guest.

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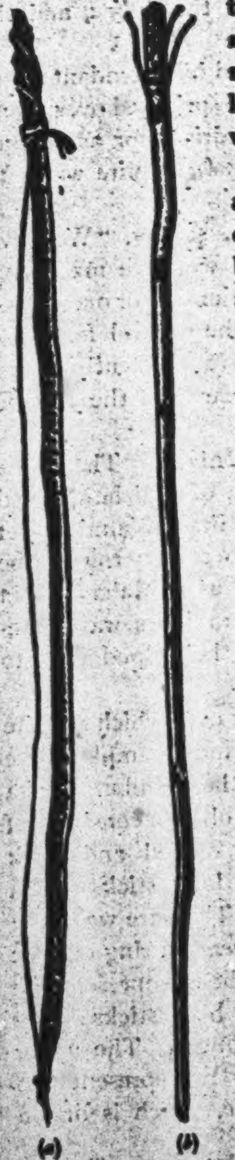

Fig. 10. Ceremonial bow and arrow of Bambura Yaka. × 1/10

to a scale of about one-tenth. Below the *maesa*, suspended by a creeper, is the *welemula*, which is merely a bundle of leaves filled with sand to represent the wild boar.

Wannaku, the shaman, put on a *hangala*, and salaamed to the *maesa*, and then sang a curious invocation (No. [illegible]XVIII), while a lad beat the drum. Wannaku now exhibited all the *yaka* properties, dancing with each in turn. Wannaku did not tell us the story of Bambura Yaka, and as our many questions did not elicit it we may presume that he did not know it, so we did not find out whether all the properties belonged to Bambura Yaka or whether, as at Sitala Wanniya, which we visited afterwards, some belonged to his attendants.

After a short time Wannaku bent his head over the *maesa*, shouted, let down his hair, and became possessed. He picked up each of the big *yaka* arrows in turn and danced with them shouting, and thus showing that he was pleased with them. Up to this time he had not danced round the *maesa*, only in front of it, that is, facing east towards Inginiyagala, the home of Bambura.

The shaman next took up the bow and arrow and danced wildly in all directions, pulling at the bowstring to see if it were strong enough, although he did not let fly. Being at last satisfied with his weapon he aimed at the *welemula* and shot, and although he hit it he only wounded the "boar," so the shaman continued to dance as though following the animal, but although he occasionally pulled hard on

Plate XLIV

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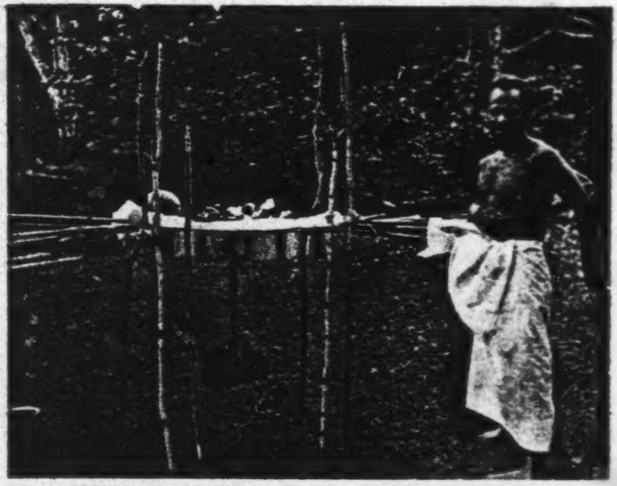

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, offerings and properties prepared for the ceremony by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

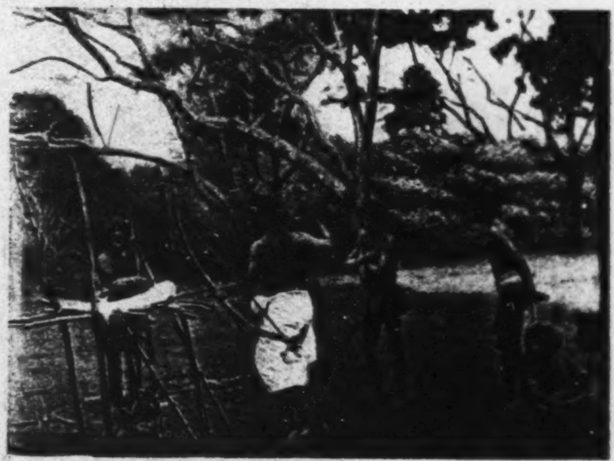

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Wannaku kills the boar (Maha Oya)*

[facing p. 246]

the bowstring aiming in the air he did not loose his arrow. 535 796 Soon he slipped down on one knee letting the other leg trail on the ground, and we were told that the wild boar had turned and charged him. Immediately one of the Vedda onlookers sprang forward and "medicined" the leg, that is to say, he wiped it down with a leaf as though he swept the pain from the leg to the earth, and the shaman, apparently cured, continued to hunt. Three times he shot at the *welemula* and hit it each time, then leaning back in the arms of his supporter he gasped: "I have shot the boar, now I am going." After more gasping and quivering he fell into his supporter's arms and the *yaka* left him.

After the ceremony all the food was eaten except the pumpkin which was left to rot on the *maesa*. Wannaku told us that the *yaku* would come and eat this, getting under the *maesa* and sucking the goodness out of it; the pumpkin would remain there and would look perfect, but should anyone cook it and try to eat it, he would find its substance was gone, so that it would be like trying to eat grass. As we asked to keep the bow and arrows, which would otherwise have been left to rot on the *maesa*, Wannaku sprinkled some water over them and muttered an explanation to the *yaku* before giving them to us.

THE PATA YAKU CEREMONY.

All Veddas recognise childbirth as a time of extreme pain 843 796 and even danger to women, and the individuals of the Sitala Wanniya group invoke the aid of the *yaku* as soon as pregnancy is diagnosed[1]. A week before we arrived at Sitala Wanniya this ceremony had been held on behalf of Bevini, the wife of Vela, who did not appear to be at all far advanced in pregnancy. On the other hand, Mari, the wife of Pema, on whose account the Pata Yaku dance which we witnessed was performed, appeared to be quite six months pregnant. The delay had probably been caused only by the lack of the good things which it was necessary to offer to the *yaku* on these occasions, and both Pema and his father-in-law Nila seemed very gratified when

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[1] We did not hear of this ceremony among the Veddas of any other group.

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properties had been used previously in the ceremony performed 796
for Bevini[1].

Two dancers must take part in the ceremony, and one of 843.
them should be the woman's father, whether he be shaman or
not; if the woman has no father, or if he is unable to dance, 796
her paternal uncle or her husband may take his part. In the 535.
ceremony we witnessed Nila, the father of Mari, and Vela, who was no relation to her, both wore the *hangala*. Nila also wore wristlets and cross shoulder straps of bark which represented beads.

As usual all the women and children collected at one side of the cleared space to watch the ceremony, and Mari joined the other women in preparing the offering of cooked food. An arrow was struck (Plate XLV, fig. 1) in the ground beside the *usmukaliya*, and Nila, standing in front of the three posts, began an invocation (No. XXX) which was soon taken up by the other men. Nila salaamed, took the arrow out of the earth and began to dance round the three posts, and then in and out between them, without observing any particular order, holding the end of the shaft with one hand and the head of the arrow with the other. The usual steps and movements were performed, the knees bent, the body inclined from the waist and swaying to and fro, the arms with the arrow between them being moved to and fro, but not raised higher than the chest. Vela followed Nila closely; it appeared that he should have held an arrow, but not having one, he did the next best thing and pretended that he had one, holding his hands as though there was an arrow between them.

Suddenly when between two of the posts Nila dropped the arrow on the ground and leapt over it. Kaira, one of the onlookers, immediately picked it up and returned it to Nila. Nila then dropped the arrow between the other two posts and again leapt over it. This was repeated several times, Kaira always picking up the arrow and returning it to Nila, whose movements Vela imitated. Although we asked numerous questions as to the meaning of this figure no reason could be supplied, "Our fathers did it" was all the information we could obtain. The movements had gradually become quicker and

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[1] See genealogy, p. 61.

843 wilder till after a final leap between the posts Nila fell supine with outstretched arms, and was immediately supported by one 796 of the onlookers. The *yaka* of the high post now possessed Nila 535 who, after a few minutes' immobility, began to shiver and gasp, then springing forward he danced to the posts with shuffling feet and head bent forward, and examined each one in turn. This he did by dropping his head on them so that his face was partly buried in the bast, his supporter always close behind him (Plate XLV, fig. 2). We were told that Nila was now possessed by all three *yaku*, who appear to have entered him as he bent over the posts. The exact moment of the entry and exit of the *yaka* into the person of the shaman was often very ill-defined, although in this instance, and indeed in most cases when more than one *yaka* was present at a dance, it was clear when the first *yaka* arrived, it seemed that the other *yaku* entered the shaman without giving any immediate sign of their presence.

The *yaku* speaking through Nila signified that they were pleased with the posts built for their reception. Then Nila picked up the *wila* and shouting, apparently with approval, held it up by each end and whirled the handle round making the bast strands fly out, then he approached Mari and waved it over [787] her head and rested it there, so that her head was buried in the bast for several seconds while Nila predicted a male child (Plate XLVI, fig. 1)[1]. Nila then danced to Handuna and waved the *wila* over him. No particular reason was given for [554] this, Handuna being no relation to the woman, but he was the most important old man in the community.

After covering Handuna with the *wila*, Nila danced wildly, always with the rapt expression of a man possessed by a *yaka*, showing his pleasure by holding the *wila* aloft and whirling it round and round. Then Nila put down the *wila* and took the *amamula* and dancing with it in his hand he approached Mari stretching it out towards her, but he only stayed a few seconds and passed on to Handuna and falling on the latter's chest spoke and again foretold the birth of a male child to Mari.

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[1] The sex of the child is determined by the position assumed by the strips of bast as they fall over the woman's head. If most fall over the woman's face the child will be a girl, if over the occiput a boy.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911

AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XLV

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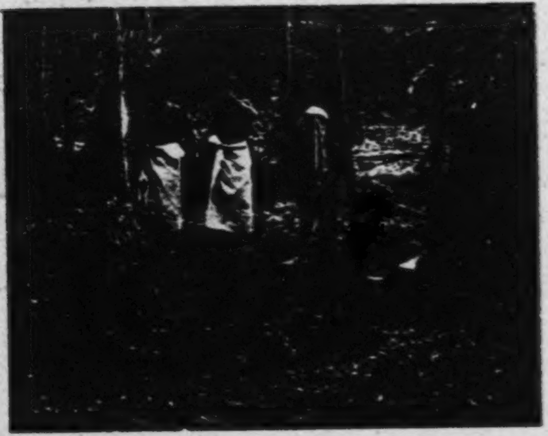

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

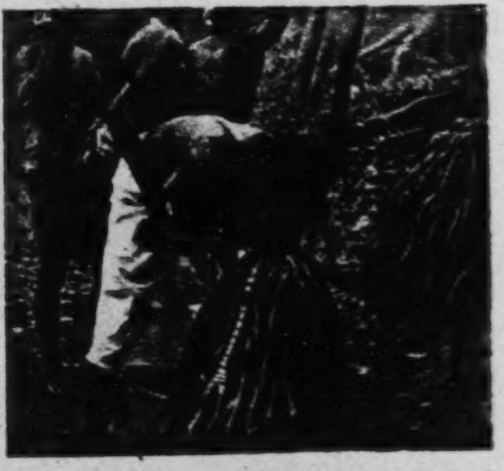

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman buries his face in the *aramakaliya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250a]

Plate XLVI

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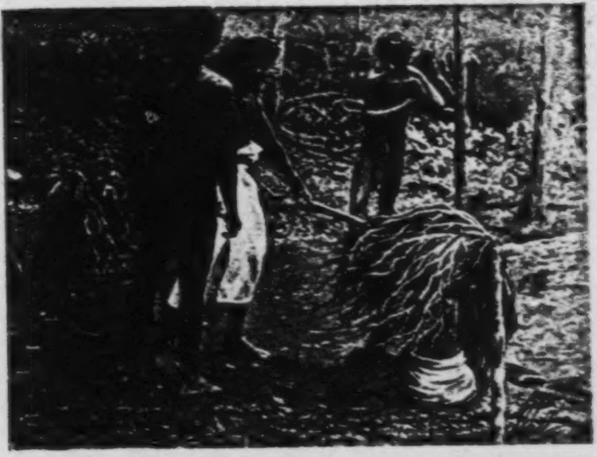

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman predicts the sex of the child (Sitala Wanniya)*

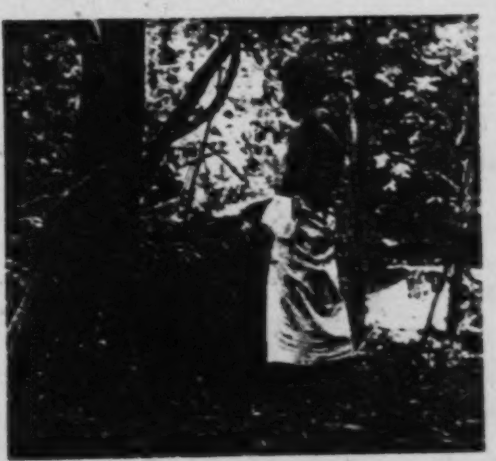

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, Nila prays for his daughter's safe delivery (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250 b]

Nila exchanged the *amamula* for the *wila*, and coming to Mari again, raised the *wila* above her head and lowered it to the ground, letting the bast strips brush her face and body and then sweep the ground. This was done in order to wipe away the pain of labour. Then he leapt back to the centre of the cleared space and danced in and out between the three posts, hitting them with the *wila*. This was probably a sign of pleasure, for the driving away of *yaku* by striking their resting place would probably only take place at the end of the ceremony. He again approached Mari and fell back into the arms of his supporter, only remaining quiet for a few seconds until, trembling and gasping, he bent his head over the *usmukaliya* and buried his face in the bast. After doing this over each post he returned to the *usmukaliya* and said he must go, speaking in the usual husky and gasping *yaku* voice; then he fell exhausted into the arms of his supporter. All the Veddas now began to sing the invocation, and it was clear that the *yaku* had not departed from Nila for he soon began to quiver and gasp again, and sprang forward and danced between the three posts; then he began to search for something, lifting the strands of bast on the *usmukaliya*, and after an exaggerated pantomimic search he found the *wila*, turning this in his hands so that the bast swung at right angles, he waved it over each of the three posts; then turning to the *usmukaliya*, bent his head low over it and fell back exhausted. The *yaku* now left him and he recovered consciousness without any quivering or trembling, salaamed to the *usmukaliya* and sat down to rest. All the properties were immediately piled together under a tree. It may be noted that although Vela began to dance with Nila, he did not become possessed and so took no part in the latter portion of the dance.

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After a short rest Nila went to the pile and holding a few strands of bast in one hand (Plate XLVI, fig. 2) repeated the following prayer to the Pata Yaku for his daughter's safety a number of times:— 539

Ant! magê darwanta kisi antarâwak wenda epâ mê wara.
Goda panta denda ônê.

Ant! (May) any harm not happen to my child this time.
(You) must permit (her) to land (i.e. to escape from her sea of troubles).

as a smoker; the other was "just an arrow" and did not appear 796
to fulfil any specific purpose. Small leafy twigs from the sur- 778
rounding trees were placed on the ground round the arrows, and on these a number of betel leaves and areca nuts were placed as an offering, the twigs being a device for preventing the offering to the *yaku* from touching the ground.

All the adult men of the community decided to take part in 796
this dance, as only those who become possessed by Dola Yaka
would derive benefit from the ceremony, that is, obtain special 535
favour and help from him in gathering honey. In order to 787
provide a supporter for each man, the dance was performed in two parts, Nila, Kaira and Pema taking part in the first performance. The ceremony began by these men walking several times round the arrows singing an invocation (No. XXXI) as they moved clockwise and occasionally salaamed to the arrows. Soon they began to dance and at times passed their hands, palms downwards, over the top of the arrows. This was the old custom; the reason for it was not known. After a little while Nila fell and was supported, soon all three dancers became possessed and bending forward shook their heads over the arrows. Then Nila taking the lead, they all moved to one end of the dancing ground, where they assumed the strained attitude of men listening attentively for the distant hum of bees, with body bent forward, one hand to the ear and the other raised as if to impose silence on their companions. Suddenly they all leapt back to the arrows and danced round them wildly, and shook their heads low over them; again they listened for the bees and beat their chests with joy, crying, "We hear many bees, there will be plenty of honey."

Returning to the arrows they danced round them again, at 796
times falling back into the arms of their supporters, and again 535
springing forward to dance. Nila gave each of us a betel leaf as a sign of favour from Dola Yaka, and then spoke in a gasping voice to Handuna who answered him. All beat their bodies with both hands, driving away imaginary bees. Again they listened for the bees, and this time picked up some leafy twigs and pretending they were alight shook them beneath the *maesa*, which now represented a comb, but they soon sprang back and

796 535 rushed to the opposite side of the dancing ground to get away from the angry bees. After repeating this pantomime, Nila, with much gasping and shaking of the arrows, promised *bambara* combs to Handuna, wherever he went. More dancing round the arrows followed and another mock smoking was performed, after which the three men fled from the *maesa* brushing the bees away and even feigning to pick some off their bodies. Then they returned to the arrows round which they danced until they all fell back and Dola Yaka departed from them.

Handuna explained to us that in dancing to Dola Yaka it was usual to hold a cloth over the head, and that Dola Yaka had remarked on the absence of cloths and warned the dancers that evil might befall them if they were to slip and fall with their heads uncovered. So two pieces of white cloth were provided for Handuna and Vela, who put on *hangala* and repeated the dance. The ceremony was identical with that already described except in two respects; in the first part of the dance Handuna and Vela held their cloths in their outstretched arms, frequently putting them over their heads and always doing so when listening for the hum of the bees, and when they prophesied to their fellows each held his cloth so as to cover both the man to whom he spoke and himself. Both men, however, put down their cloths just before the end of the dance and, pulling the arrows out of the ground, went through the pantomime of cutting the combs from below the *maesa* with them.

THE INVOCATION OF THE RAHU YAKU.

776 796 Sitala Wanniya was the only place at which we saw this ceremony, though the Rahu Yaku were also invoked at the *alutyakagama* ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula. At Sitala Wanniya the Rahu Yaku are called upon to cure sickness and to give good luck in collecting honey from trees. It seemed that they were not invoked to grant protection or good fortune when rock-honey was sought, this being the function of Dola Yaka. The offerings necessary to propitiate them are coconuts and rice, and each dancer must wear a piece of white cloth and cross shoulder straps of bark.

The story relates that there was once three brothers, and one 776
day the youngest was very angry and quarrelled with his wife.
He left her in his cave and went out hunting, and when he 773
returned he found a strange man in the cave with his wife. The stranger escaped so quickly that the angry husband could not shoot him; but he then beat his wife, and though he did not kill her he jumped into the fire and was burnt to death and became Gini Rahu Bandar or Yaka. When they died his two brothers became Rahu Yaku also.

A post was placed in the centre of the cleared dancing space, 796
the upper end was split and bound so as to form the support for
a pot containing coconut milk, a few areca nuts and betel leaves. 535
This was called the *wilkoraha* (lake pot), for once in the old 778
days water was required to make the coconut milk for an offering to the Rahu Yaku, and as there was no stream near by it had to be fetched from a lake; hence the name *wilkoraha*. A *maesa* (well seen in Plate LXVIII, fig. 1) about 4 ft 6 in. high was built of sticks at one side of the dancing ground, and two pots of cooked rice and coconut milk were put on it as an offering to the *yaku*. A piece of bark to represent a necklace was put on the *wilkoraha*; it was not known why it was necessary to offer a necklace to the Rahu Yaku, but it was always done[1]. Wooden *kaduwa* (swords) were used when invoking Rahu Yaku; these were two flattened sticks about 18 ins. long decorated with bands of red and yellow pigment and with guards made of twigs of fresh green leaves. One of these *kaduwa* without its guard is shown in fig. 11.

The use of the sword (*kaduwa*) and the objects themselves 177
are both curious, for Veddas have never used any weapon but the bow and axe, and Handuna explained that though these were called *kaduwa* they really represented ceremonial arrows

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[1] It was quite clear that Vedda men never wore necklaces, but *yaku*, especially dangerous *yaku*, as the Rahu Yaku were declared to be, were sometimes offered necklaces or pieces of bast to represent them. Thus at Unuwatura Bubula, Indigollae Yaka was considered especially dangerous, and the shaman kept a particular string of old and highly valued beads and used it only when making invocations to this *yaka*. These and other instances strengthen the idea expressed in Chapter VIII that beads are prized among the Veddas for their magical properties, the idea of ornament being quite secondary.

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or *aude*, yet *ran kaduwa* the "golden sword" is mentioned in many of the songs and invocations, so that it seems that the whole of the Vedda ceremony of the invocation of the Rahu Yaku has been taken over from the Sinhalese, among whom the cult of Gini Rahu Bandar occurs. This borrowing must have occurred in ancient days, perhaps as long ago as the time when the Sinhalese invaded the Vedda country and carved the drip ledges on the caves, for as already mentioned the Sinhalese Rahu Bandar has become identified with three Vedda brothers whose spirits have retained only traces of the fierce nature of the Sinhalese demon. Once having borrowed the idea of a sword (*kaduwa*) and invocations in which it was mentioned, its name would remain, though in course of time the implement would become assimilated to the Vedda *aude*.

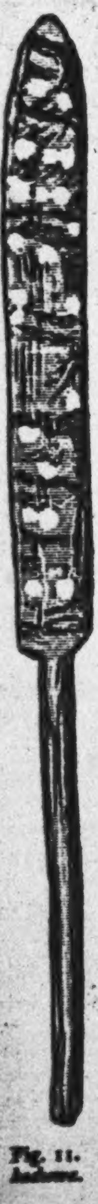

Fig. 11. *Ran kaduwa.* × ⅓.

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Handuna and Kaira put on *hangala* and stood in front of the *wilkoraha* with the *kaduwa* in their hands, and Handuna began to recite the invocation to the Rahu Yaku (No. XXXV). Kaira took up the words and repeated them, always a few words behind Handuna. Soon they began to dance slowly round the *wilkoraha* holding the *kaduwa* in the same way as the *aude* is held in dances, i.e. right hand on point and left hand at the base of the handle, and as they danced they twirled them slowly in their fingers (Plate XLVIII, fig. 1). After a short time they both swayed their bodies more and the dance became more vigorous; then they began to shiver and shake their heads and became possessed by the two elder Rahu Yaku. They shouted, leaped and raised their *kaduwa* in the air, twirled them round with their

arms straight above their heads, and then stretching over the 796
wilkoraha exchanged *kaduwa*. They danced a few steps 535
and exchanged *kaduwa* again, and yet once more before they bent their heads low over the *wilkoraha*, by which action the *yaku* inspected the coconut milk and pronounced it very good. The exchange of swords was merely in imitation of the Rahu brothers who were said to have done this in their lifetime.

After approving of the offering of milk Handuna and Kaira, 796
both followed by their supporters, danced to Nila, and Handuna 535
placed his sword on the latter's chest while swaying his body 786
and moving from one foot to the other, prophesying that Nila would have good luck in hunting and would take many combs (Plate XLVIII, fig. 2). Nila answered; Handuna and Kaira still gasping and trembling said that the *yaku* possessing them must go now, and that their brother the Fire Chief would come. There was more wild dancing round the *wilkoraha*, and both men were so overcome that had their supporters not held them in their arms they must have fallen. We could not determine the exact time of the departure of the two elder Rahu Yaku and the advent of the younger brother[1]. Handuna and Kaira bent their heads simultaneously over the *wilkoraha*, inspected the milk, were satisfied and continued to dance, and while a bundle of grass was brought and set on fire they raised both arms, and after holding hands over the *wilkoraha* they rushed to the burning grass and danced on the fire till they put it out, then again holding hands they danced and bent their heads over the *wilkoraha*. More grass was set alight, and after repeating their dance on it both fell back into their supporters' arms. In a few seconds they sprang forward and danced up to Nila: Handuna spoke in the gasping *yaka* voice and covered the swords with a cloth. More grass having been set alight the dance continued as before, first round the pot, then on the flames, and then round the pot again. While Handuna placed his sword on the chest of Nila the spirit within him spoke saying he must go soon, but both Handuna and Kaira danced again before

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[1] It was perfectly clear that the idea of one *yaka* possessing two people at the same time presented no difficulty to Handuna and the rest of the Sitala Wanniya [illegible]y.

796 returning to Nila and giving him their *kaduwa* to hold. Th
they did because they wanted to put them down, and they co
535 sidered them too sacred and dangerous to be put on the groun
786 or even to be held by anyone who was not a grown man wh
had frequent intercourse with the spirits.

Handuna took the necklace from the *wilkoraha* and show
796 it to one of us (B. Z. S.), to whom he gave it, asking for a re
535 necklace instead of the bast one. Kaira followed Handuna an
gave to each of us betel leaves from the *wilkoraha* as a sign o
favour from the youngest of the Rahu Yaku. Then both wen
to the *maesa*, looked at the offering, and then fell back into thei
supporters' arms. We were told that the *yaka* was well pleas
with the offering and was about to depart from them, but Nil
sang the invocation and soon the two dancers began to trembl
and shake their heads, then shouting hah! hah! they spran
forward and danced again. They picked up their *kaduwa* fro
the *wilkoraha*, where they had been put for safety, this bein
considered a sufficiently sacred spot. Using the leaves whic
formed the hilts of their swords, they scooped out the coconu
milk from the *wilkoraha* and scattered it about, and those o
whom it happened to fall considered themselves lucky. The
the *yaka* spoke to Nila saying that he wished to go, and Nil
answered "It is well." But before the *yaka* left Handuna an
Kaira, the two men danced toward that side of the cleared sp
where the women and children were grouped together, raisin
[755] their *kaduwa* and pointing at the group. One woman wa
carrying a baby suffering from yaws, and Handuna held hi
kaduwa over the child's head and promised that its sores shoul
be cured. Then Handuna and Kaira gave their *kaduwa* t
Nila; both bent their heads over the *maesa* and the *yaka* left the

796 The necklace was replaced on the *wilkoraha* which was p
with the *kaduwa* on the *maesa*. Handuna and Kaira repeat
a charm over them and all were removed from the *maes*
Handuna picked a few leafy twigs, put them under a tre
then took the leaves from the *kaduwa* and placed them o
the freshly picked leaves, so that the hallowed leaves migh
not touch the ground; he then poured the remains of th
coconut milk from the *wilkoraha* over them.

Plate XLVIII

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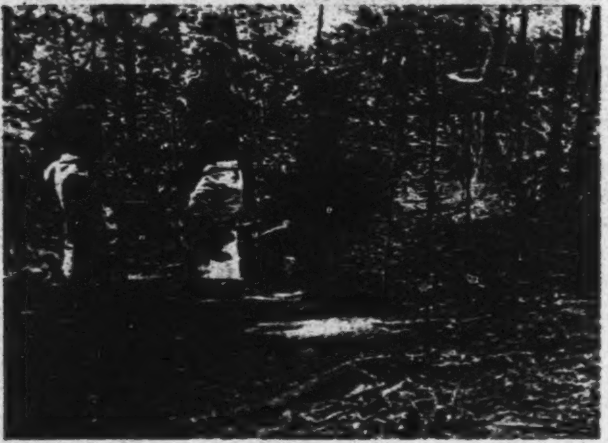

Fig. 1. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

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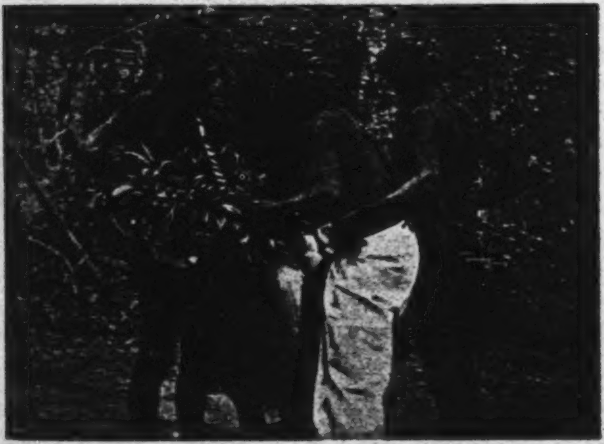

Fig. 2. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the shaman prophesies good luck in hunting and honey gathering (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p.258]

When later we asked Handuna for the *kaduwas* as specimens, 796
the request was not granted until something was given in exchange to the Rahu Yaku, as Handuna said they might cause trouble if their property were taken from them.

WANAGATA YAKU.

The story of the Wanagata Yaku was that once a family 776
became imprisoned in their rock-shelter by the fall of rock 773
which blocked the entrance to the cave, so that the whole family died and their spirits became Wanagata Yaku, who are now invoked for help in hunting. In spite of this the ceremonial with which these *yaku* are invoked did not appear to have any reference to the story.

A sapling rather more than six feet high with its head and 796
branches was stripped of its bark and thrust into the ground in 535
the centre of the space cleared for dancing; its upper end had 778
been split previously so as to form a support for small objects, and long strands of bast were tied to it. A handkerchief was thrown over the top and pressed down between the split ends, and some betel leaves were placed on this.

The shaman wearing a *hangala* danced slowly round the 796
post with a handkerchief in his hand, while the invocation was 535
sung. The handkerchief was soon exchanged for an *aude*, and it was noted that this was not the same one that had been used when invoking Kande Yaka in a previous dance. In order to avoid putting the handkerchief on the ground the shaman tied it round his shoulder. Then taking some betel leaves he danced with these and the *aude* in his hands, then transfixing the betel leaves on the point of the *aude* he raised them to his head, thus offering them to the Wanagata Yaku (Plate XLIX, fig. 1). Soon he became possessed and bent his head, shaking his hair over his face as he clung to the post with one hand while his whole body quivered and shook. With a shout he seized two *aude*, and holding one in each hand came to one of us (C. G. S.) and holding both *aude* over his shoulders said, as he quivered and shifted from one foot to the other, "You have called us, what do you want?" He returned to the post, when a rice

796 535 mortar was brought and a bowl containing coconut milk in which betel leaves floated was placed upon it. The shaman placed a betel leaf from the bowl on the *aude* and presented one to each of us in turn, as a sign of favour on the part of the Wanagata Yaku, speaking in a hoarse gasping voice and raising his arms alternately the while. He returned to the post, and, grasping the bast streamers, bent his head (Plate XLIX, fig. 2) and quivered all over before dancing round it with both *aude* in his hands; finally he clasped the post with bowed head, and the *yaku* left him.

THE ALUTYAKAGAMA CEREMONY AT UNUWATURA BUBULA

796 The structure of the *alutyakagama* is well shown in a number of the figures illustrating this ceremony, and is especially clear in fig. 1 of plate LII.

It seems probable that this is not a pure Vedda ceremony, but is to be regarded as an amalgamation of a dance to Kande Yaka and the Nae Yaku, whom this people called the Alutyaku (i.e. New Yaku), and of a dance to Gale Yaka only met with under this name here and at Omuni. We were unable to determine whether the *alutyakagama* structure had always been used when dancing to Gale Yaka, and had been carried from his cult to that of the Nae Yaku, or had long been considered necessary for the invocation of the Nae or Alut Yaku. Perhaps neither of these events occurred; indeed, we consider it most probable that both dances have been confused with the *kolemaduwa* or one of its early forms such as the *ruwala* ceremony which is described later on in this chapter, and which is almost certainly of foreign origin.

Unuwatura Bubula is a small and extremely poor settlement of Veddas, of whom a general description has been given on p. 47.

796 535 The dance began by Sela Kaurala repeating an invocation with a handkerchief on his head[1], while Naida Kaurala holding

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[177] [1] Unfortunately we have no exact note stating to whom this invocation was sung. It is most probable that it was to Gale Yaka, as this was the *yaka* by whom the shaman was first possessed. If this is so the fact of the handkerchief being held over the head is of interest, as Mr Parker identifies Gale Yaka with the Sinhalese Gale Deviya who is depicted with a three-tiered hat, which is also worn by his dancer, called

Plate XLIX

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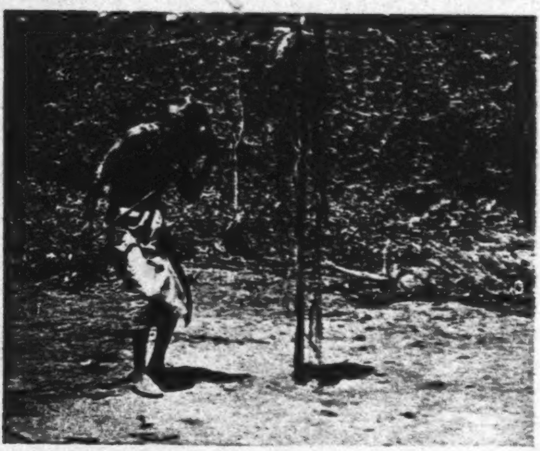

Fig. 1. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman offers betel leaves to the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)

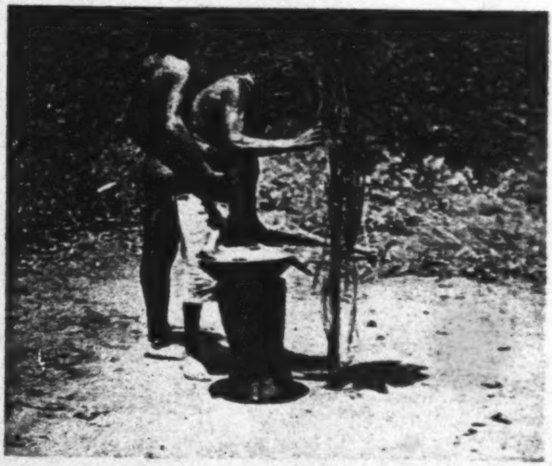

Fig. 2. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 260]

a handkerchief between his hands danced first round the *alutyakagama*, and then in and out between the posts, at times holding the handkerchief over his head (Plate L, fig. 1). We were told that these handkerchiefs would be kept apart for the *yaku* and would never be used for any purpose other than dancing. The shaman, Sela Kaurala, soon became agitated and was supported, and the Gale Yaka entered his person. Now he assumed the rapt expression of one possessed, pulled down his hair, and with a shout caught hold of the leaves hanging from the *alutyakagama*, where he continued to dance in and out of the structure, shaking and hitting the hanging leaves as he passed, but frequently stopping at the west front to take hold of the bunches of leaves while quivering all over and shouting (Plate L, fig. 2). Now a rice-mortar was brought into the *alutyakagama*, and the shaman placed the offering of cooked food upon it for the *yaku* to see and appreciate the good things provided. The *aude* was then placed on the rice pot, and the shaman, holding the leaves with both hands, shouted and shook his head, and then, taking an *aude* in either hand, picked up a few grains of rice on one of them (Plate LI, fig. 1), which he smelt, and although he did not eat them the *yaka* now pronounced the food to be good. About this time the shaman became possessed by one of the *Nae Yaku*. Three times the shaman inspected the rice, being possessed by a different *Nae Yaku* each time, and each spirit shouted his satisfaction. We were unable to discover the names of these as the shaman was taken ill after this dance, but there seemed no doubt that the dancer would know the *Nae Yaku* by whom he had been possessed. The shaman now wore two long necklaces of beads, putting them round his neck and under his arms, so as to form cross shoulder ornaments; we were told that these were for the *yakini*, but we were unable to discover whether this was one of the Alut Yakini or Gale Yakini who was mentioned in this locality.

The ceremony continued for some time as before, the shaman frequently shaking the leaves, shouting and gasping, and again inspecting the food. There was very little dancing, but this may

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ammattirale, when dancing to him. Sometimes, however, when a three-tiered hat could not be obtained the dancer held a handkerchief over his head.

Plate L

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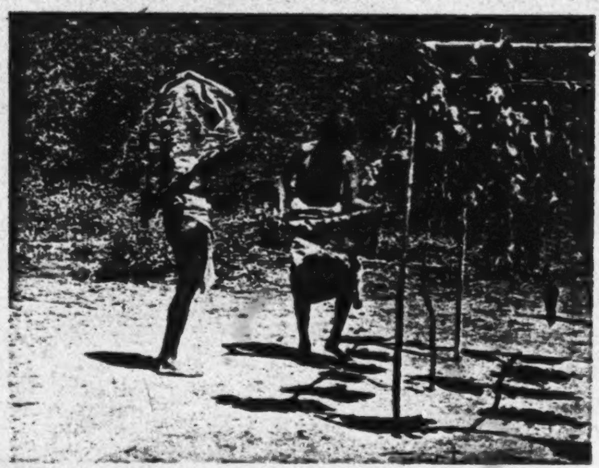

Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the beginning of the invocation (Unuwatura Bubula)

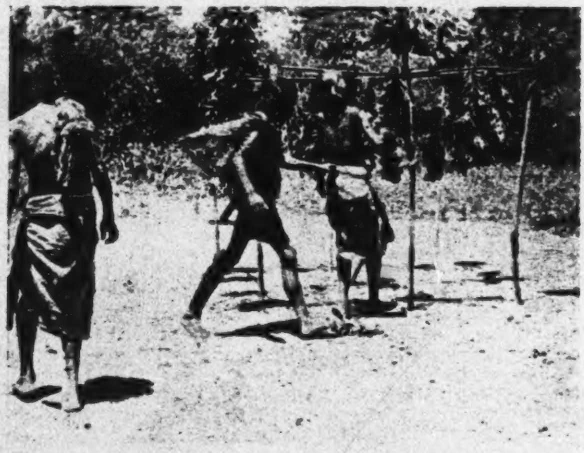

Fig. 2. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman and his supporter at the *alutyakagama* (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 261 a]

Plate LI

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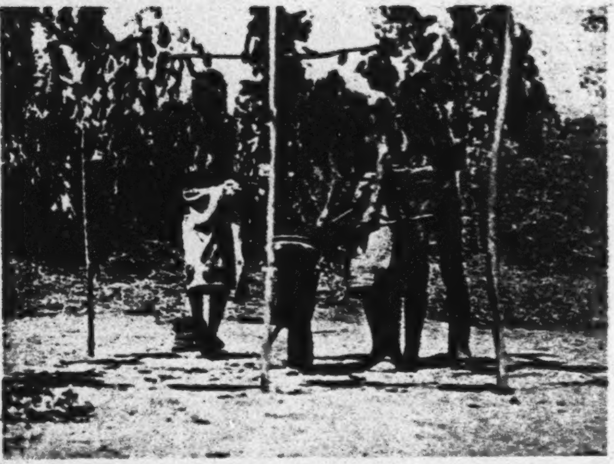

Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, testing the offering (Unuwatura Bubula)

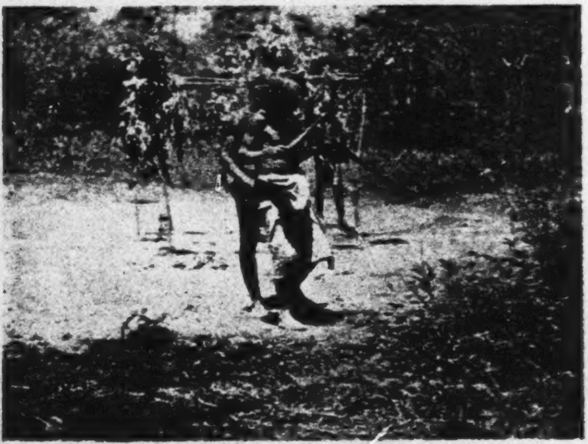

Fig. 2. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman comes to us with an *aude* in each hand (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 261 b]

have been because the shaman was an old man who suffered from a severe cough. At one time, instead of picking up the rice with an *aude*, he did it with the corner of his handkerchief. Great care was always taken that neither the *aude*, the beads nor the handkerchief should be put on the ground, and when the shaman wanted to get rid of either of the two former he placed them on the rice pot; at one time when he did not require the handkerchief he tied it over his shoulder, for to place anything belonging to the *yaku* on the ground would be to offer a serious insult to them.

After some time the first rice pot was removed, and a second one was brought. Sela Kaurala squatted beside it and sang, while Naida Kaurala danced with the handkerchief in his hands. One pot of food was for the *yaka*, and one for the *yakini*. The shaman exchanged the handkerchief for an *aude* and danced with that, but soon picked up another *aude* and danced with one in each hand singing an invocation (No. XXXVII). Now he became possessed by Rahu Yaka, with the usual accompaniment of shivering and quaking and pulling at the leaves hanging from the *alutyakagama*. Some grass was brought and put under the *alutyakagama*; this was lit, and the shaman danced on the fire: more shaking and holding of the leaves followed, and then with an *aude* in each hand, which he held by the blades, he approached us (Plate LI, fig. 2) and spoke. He returned to the *alutyakagama*, and, holding the leaves with both hands, bent over the rice pot, and then danced round and in and out of the structure, hitting the pendant leaves. Meanwhile the Rahu Yaka song was repeated; at last stopping at the west side he bent his head over the rice pot and fell back. After a short rest Sela Kaurala put on the *hangala* and danced in the same way that Naida Kaurala had done, becoming possessed by Gale Yaka. There was no exceptional feature in this dance; the shaman danced at one time with the handkerchief and afterwards with the *aude*, and inspected the food, and there was much holding on to the leaves and shaking and speaking in the hoarse *yaka* voice. Before the *yaka* left the shaman he took the rice pot from the pounder and spun it (Plate LII, fig. 1); the second pot of food was brought and he spun that too. After the *yaka* had left him the shaman,

Plate LII

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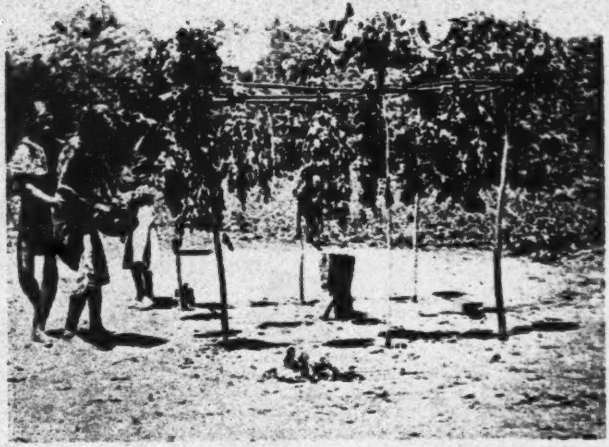

Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot of food (Unuwatura Bubula)

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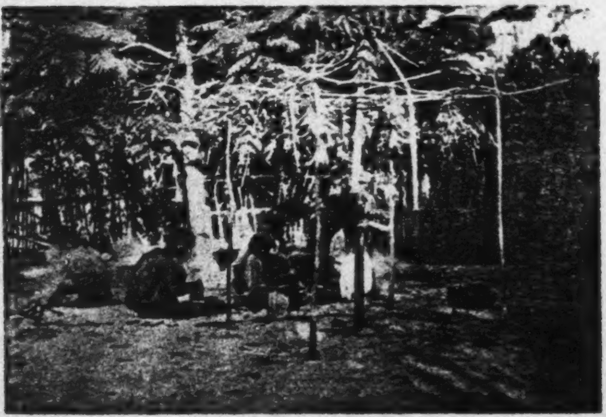

Fig. 2. Ruwala ceremony, the *ruwala* prepared by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

[facing p. 262]

still dancing, stripped the leaves from the *alutyakagama*, and, holding on to the horizontal cross bar, shook the framework violently in order to drive away any of the *yaku* who might still be resting there. 791 535

[114] Unfortunately we were not able to get much trustworthy information about this or any of the other dances at Unuwatura Bubula, as Sela Kaurala, who appeared to suffer from asthma and chronic bronchitis, coughed up a good deal of blood after this dance, and was unable to discuss the ceremony with us afterwards. His pupil, Naida Kaurala, was not nearly so well informed. There were several points which we were unable to settle satisfactorily; Gale Yaku, we were told, were many and not one Yaka, yet Gale Yaka or Yaku seemed confused with Kande Yaka, for we were told that the big *aude* was for Kande Yaka and the smaller one for Bilindi Yaka. Nevertheless the shaman held both when dancing to Gale Yaka, and he spun the pot of rice, which in several other communities had been done by the shaman when possessed by Kande Yaka.

THE RUWALA CEREMONY.

This ceremony was danced by the Veddas of Uniche. It began by Wannaku, who was wearing a *hangala* of new white cloth, moving slowly round the centre post of the *ruwala* holding a bunch of leaves in each hand and reciting an invocation to Ruwala Yaka and Yakini, who live on Nuwaragala. He stood close to the central pole of the *ruwala*, and at first faced towards the north, that is, not in the direction of Nuwaragala but towards the quarter whence came the *yaku* who live on Nuwaragala and other hills who are invoked in this dance. These *yaku* were not the spirits of the dead, but had always existed as *yaku*. The original home was on the other side of the ocean in Handun Kaela, the "sandal-wood jungle," which the educated, but not the peasant, Sinhalese recognise as being in India. Long ago the *yaku* made a raft and crossed the ocean, and the sail (Sin. *ruwala*) and mast of their raft are represented by the centre pole (*ruwala*) of the structure of that name, while the streamers represent the "silver" and "golden" stays of their mast.

796 Plate LII, fig. 2 shows the *ruwala* built by Wannaku and his
535 comrades at Maha Oya.

The dance began by Wannaku moving slowly round the
796 central post. As he did this he sometimes waved the bundle of
535 leaves which he held in his hands, at other times he held his
786 hands close together in front of his body. As his dancing became quicker and more vigorous, Sina, his eldest son, placed himself behind him, and following his movements prepared to support him when he became possessed. Suddenly Wannaku fell forward assuming a cruciform attitude, his arms held stiffly at right angles to his body and his neck rigidly extended so that his head was pressed against the centre post of the *ruwala*, his supporter bearing the whole strain of holding him in this position. He still grasped the leaves in his hands, and his face was buried in the leaves tied to the centre post of the *ruwala*. He remained in this position for perhaps half a minute, then shaking violently he clutched the post in both hands. It was explained that the *yaku* were in the leaves tied to the *ruwala*, and that thence they passed into the body of the shaman, in whose shaking and quivering person they inspected and approved the structure of the *ruwala*, while the shaman clutched the central post. After a few moments the shaman danced again, this time more energetically than before, moving in and out of and round the structure of the *ruwala*, while he struck at the leaves pendant from its framework with the twigs he held in his hands. His movements became more violent, and he shouted several times. All this was explained as play on the part of the *yaku*, who thus showed their pleasure in the *ruwala* that had been built for them. Wannaku clutched at the side posts and bast streamers, and struck these with the leaves he held in his hands. The *yaku* thus examined the streamers to ascertain if they were properly made and of the right number. Wannaku then danced very energetically, and leaving the *ruwala* dragged Sina to where Mr Perera stood a few paces from the *ruwala*, and shaking and gesticulating violently spoke to him promising him success in all he undertook[1].

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[1] Mr Samuel Perera, Forest Ranger, was an old friend of the Uniche community, and it was owing to his presence and assistance at our first interview with Wannaku and his fellows that we were immediately on the best of terms with them.

Wannaku again danced in and out and round the structure, 796
then after striking the leaves and clutching the uprights of the 535
ruwala he dragged his supporter towards an elderly Vedda on-
looker, before whom he quivered and shouted as he had done 786
before Mr Perera. We were told that in this case he prophesied success in hunting. After this he returned to the *ruwala*, and, still dancing and quivering, took a streamer in his left hand and shouting and dancing wiped its length with the bunch of leaves that he held in his right hand. He began this manœuvre at the east front of the *ruwala*, and taking each streamer in turn, went round in the opposite direction to the hands of a clock, but he soon turned and went round the reverse way; we were afterwards told that he should have gone clockwise all the time, and that when he did otherwise "it was a mistake." After this he danced round the central post, clutching at the leaves that hung from the roof of the *ruwala*, and at last moving so energetically and violently as to get away from his supporter Sina, who had been following his movements as best he could. About this time Sina himself became possessed, and after a few moments of extremely energetic dancing both men fell supine at the north front of the *ruwala*. Wannaku came to himself almost immediately, but Sina appeared to remain unconscious, even when lifted up and propped against the central post of the *ruwala*, while Wannaku shook bunches of leaves in his face and over his head, Wannaku meanwhile dancing energetically and repeating two words, to which the onlookers answered "Eh-h." We were told that the *yaku* in this way announced their satisfaction with the *ruwala* which had been built for them, and indicated that they were now ready to go.

Then Wannaku stumbled to the central post, to which he clung in a seemingly exhausted condition, partly supported by a Vedda, who had been following him since Sina fell to the ground. As Sina, who had been helped up by another man, still appeared in a semi-conscious condition, water was splashed over him, with the result that he soon came to himself. This was the end of the ceremonial as far as Ruwala Yaka and Ruwala Yakini were concerned, but after a short break another Vedda invoked two other *yaku*, Milalane Yaka and Milalane

776 535 786 Yakini, who live on a hill called Milalanegala. This Vedda danced in very much the same way as Wannaku had danced, and the few differences noted, such as his less energetic steps, were doubtless due to personal idiosyncrasy. However, he did not bury his head in the leaves tied to the central post on becoming possessed, but shook the leaves which he held in his right hand in his own face, having previously struck these against those pendant from the *ruwala*. After dancing for a short time he staggered up to Wannaku and spoke, the spirits possessing him asking why they were called and whether there was sickness amongst the people. To this Wannaku answered "No," telling the spirits that he had called them at the request of the white man who wished to know them. After this the celebrant again danced in and out of and round the *ruwala*, striking at the pendant leaves. Soon he buried his head in the leaves tied to the central post, his whole body quivering, then he quickly jumped away from the pole and made his way to the Ratemahatmaya of the district, who was an onlooker, and shook the leaves in his right hand against the latter's chest, telling him he would be successful in the business he was about to undertake. This was in answer to a question that the Ratemahatmaya had shouted a short time previously. There was more dancing round the central pole, the performer striking it with the leaves which he held in his hand; after a few minutes he approached Wannaku, and striking him with the leaves said something, and again danced round the central pole which he seized in his hand and shook four times, once facing each of the cardinal points of the compass, shouting loudly as he did so. This was the means adopted by the *yaku* to test the solidity of the structure. We were told that this dance was generally performed [755 787 in order to cure sickness, and if the pole fell or the structure came to pieces the patient for whose benefit it took place would die or others would become ill. At last with many quiverings and clutchings at the central post the *yaku* took their departure.

776 535 A similar dance lasting a shorter time, during which the dancer was possessed by Moranegala Yaka, then took place, after which Wannaku, who appeared to have quite recovered

from his previous fatigue, invoked Walimabagala Yaka and 796
Yakini. The dancing of these *yaku* exactly resembled that 535
described at the beginning of the ceremony, and is therefore not further recorded.

THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

It seems very doubtful whether the *kolamaduwa* as it exists 755
at the present day should be described as a Vedda ceremony at 535
all, though as it was danced by the Henebedda Veddas at 177
Bendiyagalge it merits a description. It is in any case certain that the *kolamaduwa* is not often performed, as the amount of food and other properties necessary could scarcely have been found by one small Vedda community[1]; also its main objects, the curing of disease in cattle and epidemic sickness among men, would not appeal greatly to small communities of hunters dwelling in healthy surroundings. At the present day the Henebedda Veddas make rough chena and herd cattle for the Sinhalese, but the cattle have not yet become an important factor in their lives, and the people themselves do not suffer from epidemics. Further, at Bandaraduwa, on the borders of the Eastern Province, the only other place where this dance was known among Veddas, we were told that they would perform it for the Sinhalese, and that each dancer would be paid Rs. 5 for his trouble besides being given his food. Our aged Sinhalese informant, mentioned on p. 31, told us that the *kolamaduwa* was not danced by these Veddas when he was a boy, and that he considered it had arisen as an elaboration of the *ruwala* ceremony which used to be performed in those days. The *ruwala*—already described in this chapter—itself shows signs of having been introduced from the Tamils of the east coast, though probably at a comparatively remote period. Great numbers of *yaku* and *yakini* should be invoked at the *kolamaduwa*; some,

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[1] According to Tissahami all the following offerings were necessary for a full ceremony. Eight measures of rice and two large pots in which to cook it, 10 coconuts, 5 bundles of yams, 50 plantains, 2 sugar canes, 200 betel leaves, 12 candles, 1 lb. sandal wood, 100 balls of jaggery, ½ lb. turmeric, 1 lb. of resin, 4 coloured cloths, 8 yards of white cloth, 4 necklets of beads, 8 small baskets and 8 cloths to cover them, 4 pairs of metal bangles, 1 bottle of ghee and flowers of various kinds. [782]

765 the spirits of people who frankly were not Veddas, such as
Peradeniya Bandar; others, spirits of men like Panikki Vedda
535 already referred to, famous for catching elephants and buffaloes,
177 who were Veddas in little more than name. Others, if Veddas
in name, yet behaved like Kandyan chiefs, if we may judge from
their deeds quoted in the invocations, such as building dagabas
and bringing paddy fields under cultivation. Some of the Maha
Yakini are regarded as the wives of such chiefs, and Unapane
Kiriamma is in this community regarded as the wife of
Unapane Wanniya, the chief who first brought the paddy
fields at Unapane under cultivation.

THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY AT BENDIVAGALGE.

796 This was admittedly not a full ceremony. Although the
bower was built the correct offerings were not made nor were
535 all the *yaku* invoked, and a disturbance which took place the
778 next evening was said to be due to the anger of the *yaku* on
account of the lack of offerings (see p. 125). Plate LIII, fig. 1
shows the *kolamaduwa* with bunches of leaves hanging from the
horizontal bars of the framework and a circle of leaves called
kolavegena suspended from the centre, that is, the crossing of the
horizontal bars. The shaman, Sita Wanniya, Randu Wanniya
and Kaira, holding bunches of leaves in their hands, walked
round the circle within the upright posts while they sang an
invocation to the *yaku* to come to the leaves of the *kolamaduwa*.
Soon they began to dance (Plate LIII, fig. 2) with the usual step,
gently at first, but gradually swaying and bending more and
more they brushed the leaves of the *kolamaduwa* with those
they held in their hands at each step.

A basket covered with a cloth had been placed on a tripod
in one corner of the bower, and this should have contained
various offerings for the *yakini*, including flowers and beads;
796 not having either to offer, a few leaves had been put in it.
535 Sita Wanniya seized this basket called *pakudama*, and danced
with it in both hands, then after a short time he shouted "Ah, ah!"
and became possessed by the Maha Yakini. When the Sita

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Plate LIII

Fig. 1. Kolamaduwa ceremony, the *kolamaduwa* (Henebedda)

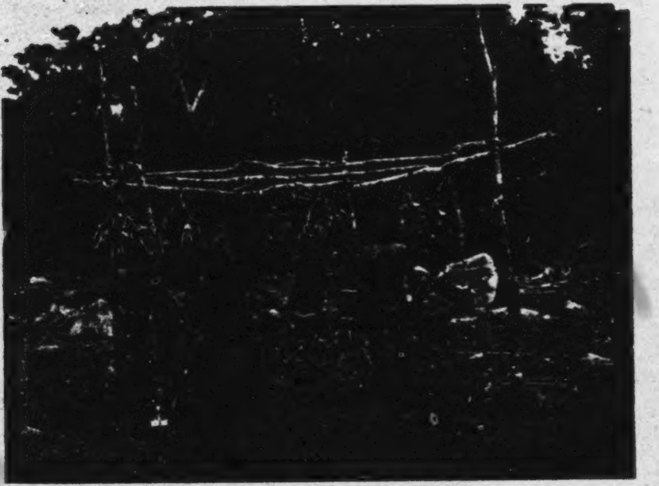

Fig. 2. Kolamaduwa ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Henebedda)

[facing p. 268a]

Plate LIV

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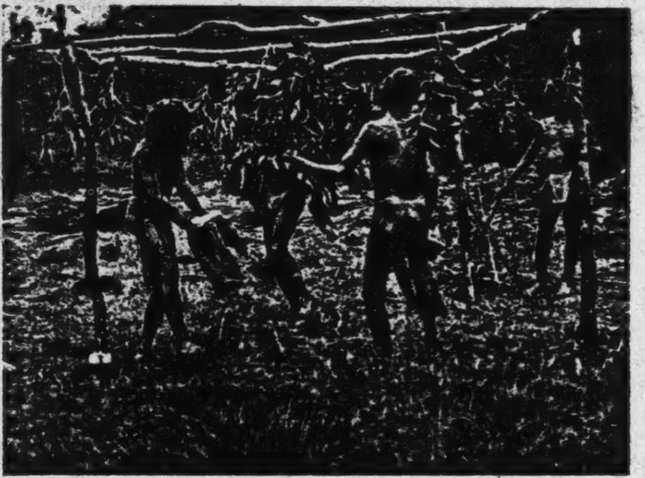

Fig. 1. Kolamaduwa ceremony, the shaman and Sita Wanniya become possessed (Henebedda)*

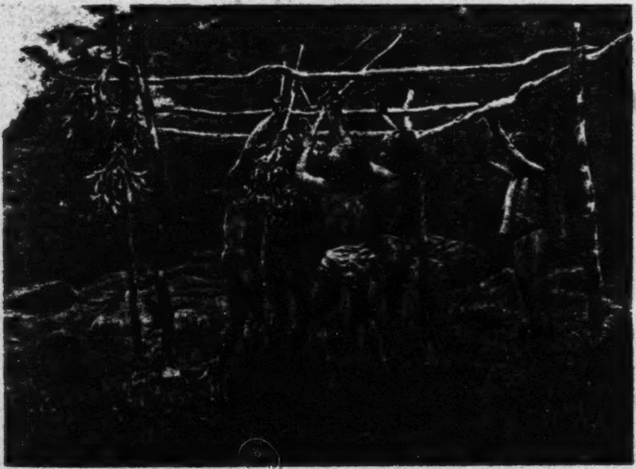

Fig. 2. Kolamaduwa ceremony, slashing the leaves from the *kolamaduwa* (Henebedda)*

[facing p. 268b]

Wanniya picked up the basket the shaman put his head inside the circle, and a Vedda immediately made ready to support him if he should fall. The shaman, now possessed, held on to the horizontal pieces and trembled violently, while his head and the upper part of his body were hidden by the leaves. Soon he left it and danced in and out of the *kolamaduwa*, followed closely by a Vedda ready to support him. Sita Wanniya hid himself in the leaves of the circle in the same way for a few seconds, his whole body swaying to and fro the while. On leaving the *kolavegena* he danced about wildly, but soon returned to put his head into the circle again, and then, swaying and tottering, danced up to us, and, speaking with the voice of the *yakini*, said, "Why have you called us? there is nothing in this basket for us, and there is no food provided." Then he returned to the circle, into which he thrust his head, while several men surrounded him and fanned him with leaves. When he emerged he again came to us, and in the person of the *yakini* asked us for bangles, and again returned to the *kolavegena*; then several of the dancers pushed their heads into it at once. Sita Wanniya returned to us and placed the basket on each of our heads in turn, presumably as a sign of favour. Then the shaman put his head into the *kolavegena*, and all the other dancers, having put down their bunches of leaves, now held peeled sticks to represent swords, and raised these over the shaman's head, and then slashed the leaves off the *kolamaduwa* (Plate LIV, fig. 2). Shouting and gasping, they all came to us, those possessed by the *yaku* gasping out that they must leave; then they returned to the *kolamaduwa* and danced in and out, raising and crossing their sticks. This was continued for a little while, the shaman several times putting his head into the circle and all using their sticks as before. The spirits left those who were possessed quietly, without producing collapse, and the performers ended the dance by silently putting their sticks on the top of the *kolavegena*, this being done to avoid putting them on the ground, as they were now sacred to the *yaku*.

After the dance the shaman cut the *kolavegena* from off the *kolamaduwa* and tore off the leaves still remaining on it, in order to prevent the *yaku* returning to it.

776 the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1].

535 755 When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe.

[292] The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice [782] plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated.

177 778 The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*.

793 At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarale*.

535 796 Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1

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[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. xxxix, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

535 shows the site selected for the dance and the arrangements
796 made. The dancing ground consisted of one of those sandy spaces surrounded by a growth of scrub and low trees which are so common on the east coast. A *kudaram*, the upper part of which was covered with leaves, had been prepared, the top of this was depressed so as to present a sort of tray upon which a white cloth was laid; within the tray were laid flowers, which in this case did duty for the food offered in the ceremony. No model of a ship was hoisted to the top of the pole, which was encircled by wreaths of small leafy bunches at heights of about 6 to 12 feet from the ground.

There were five dancers, each of whom held a bunch of leafy twigs in each hand, which when the dance began were held against the body just below the umbilicus.

The leader of the dance was an old man who held a piece of
535 cloth instead of a bunch of leaves. Behind each dancer stood
796 a man who supported him by clapping his hands round the
787 dancer's body below the latter's hands, i.e. over the hypogastric and epipubic region. At first the dancers faced the *kudaram*, their hands being held low against their thighs, but soon they began to move round the altar in single file (Plate LXX, fig. 2). As they danced they began to quiver, the rippling motion of their muscles from the knees upwards becoming progressively more violent, until as the dancers moved round the altar the majority of their superficial muscles all over the body were twitching irregularly. As the dance became quicker the dancers feigned exhaustion, leaning or falling back into the arms of their supporters, but this did not last long and dancing was not interrupted; soon the men left the altar and danced round the pole, the irregular quivering of their muscles being very striking. At times they shouted and raised the bunches of leaves which they held in their hands above their heads. They continued to dance round the altar and round the pole alternately; as they danced round the pole their movements became more violent, the men supporting the dancers let go and the latter now danced and leapt round the pole and beat the leaves tied to it with the leaves they held in their hands. As the vigour of their movements lessened, their supporters, who had been following their

Plate LXX

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796
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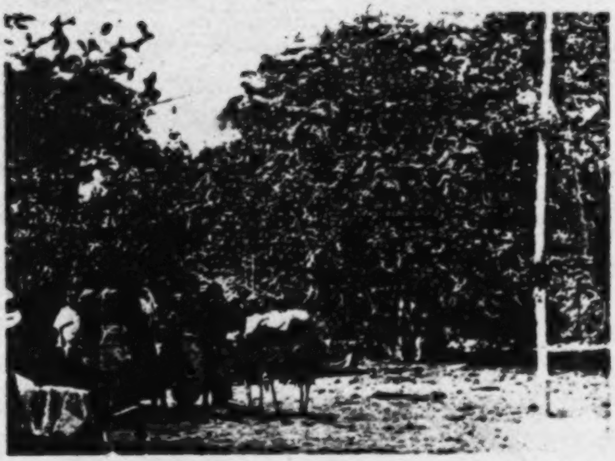

Fig. 1. Site of dance at Vakarai, showing *kudaram* and pole

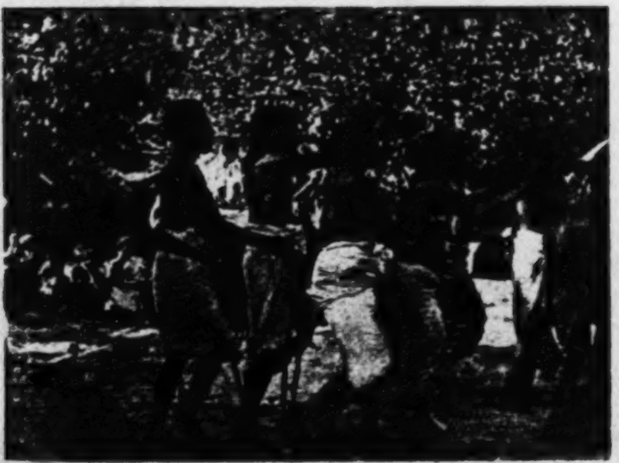

Fig. 2. Dancing round the *kudaram*

[facing p. 338a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXXI

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1796
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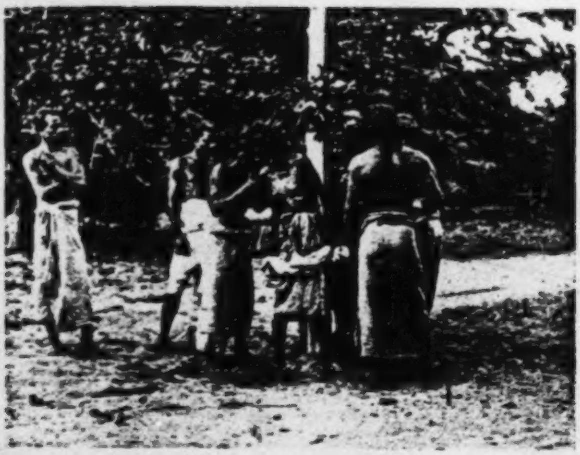

The end of the dance at Vakarai

[facing p. 338 b]

motions, once more put their arms round them, soon after which 535
the dancers fell limply into their arms. The leader of the dance
seemed especially excited at this stage and, trembling and 796
quivering all over, stood back to the pole and wildly waved his 787
scarf in the air. Soon his movements became less vigorous, his head nodded on his shoulders and hung down on his chest as he addressed the other dancers in a harsh and broken voice (Plate LXXI). In view of the Vedda ceremonies which we subsequently saw we have no doubt that he prophesied good fortune. It appeared to us that this old man really presented the ordinary characteristics of Vedda "possession," i.e. the dance, though only a rehearsal, had produced the customary effects associated with it, and certainly this old man's muscles continued to quiver irregularly for some time after the dance was over. As for the remaining dancers we have no doubt that the dance remained for them as it had begun, simply a rehearsal and an amusing piece of acting.

Such dances are held only to cure sickness or in return for 535
good crops, and it was emphatically denied that anything similar 796
took place after childbirth or death.

Very little was elicited concerning death and mourning cere- 764
monies. The corpse is washed, and it seemed that although this is usually done by a barber or *dhobie* (professional washerman) it might be done by one or more of the relatives of the dead man. The grave must be at some distance from the habitations of the living and also from their cultivation patches. No fire is lit on the grave. A feast is held a few days after burial, which ppears to be called *bati bane*, and the food for this, especially ice, is provided by the near relatives of the dead man and listributed. A *kudaram* is built upon which the food is placed for "a short time" as an offering to Kapalpei, after which it is aten by the assembled people.

This account agrees with that given by the Sarasins, who 769
ecord that a coast Vedda, Pereman, when asked about his religion 177
laughed and said they had that of the Tamils, they honoured eir dead by cooking rice in front of their house, folding their nds, saying a few words and then eating the rice. As they id this they spoke the name of the deceased and said: 'Help

123 796 guidance I touched the flowers in acknowledgement. After this the rice which had meanwhile been cooked in the enclosure in front of the shrine was offered to the goddess at the shrine, and the enclosure itself was removed.

The offering of the rice appeared to mark the conclusion of the first stage of the ceremony, for it was followed by a procession of those who were to take part in the subsequent dancing,—apparently accompanied by the image of the goddess,—out of the clearing and, as I was informed, down to the river about half a mile away for the sacred bath.

Time dragged by. The moonlight flooded the clearing, showing the ranks of the spectators sitting in their places with oriental patience and talking in undertones. At last the procession of dancers re-entered the clearing and advanced to the open space in front of the shrine. Here a ritual was gone through which seemed to be intended to induce in the dancers a state of "possession,"[7] and after the performance of this ritual the dances began.

First of all two principal dancers, wearing what were evidently ceremonial jackets of red cloth, took, each of them, in one hand one of the wooden swords previously mentioned and in the other [535] a bunch of leaves, and went in and out among the people with a queer shuffling step and a curious rhythmic brandishing of the swords and leaves. Once or twice the leader stopped, and laying his sword upon the head of some person in the crowd began to [787] prophesy.[8] One prophecy, as interpreted to me by the Chief Headman, concerned the outbreak of cholera, and was in the form

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[7] The Seligmanns, on pp. 134-5 of *The Veddas*, discuss at some length the nature of "possession" in the Vedda ritual dances.

[8] [114 197] My impression at the time was that in uttering these prophecies the leader of the dance used the Vedda language. Certainly the language used did not appear to me to be either Sinhalese or Tamil. It is true that the Seligmanns say, in the passage quoted in the text, that the "old Vedda language" as spoken by the coast Veddas was found to be Sinhalese; but (i) it seems at least possible that the Vedda language may remain to some extent in ritual use among them; and (ii) I am inclined to think that in the ceremony here described the invocation of Rahu Yaku, described by the Seligmanns on pp. 254-9 of *The Veddas*, was combined with the worship of Ammal and Kapalpe, described by

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm 123
would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a pro- 796
phecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began [787]
to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *choregos*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wach! wach! wach!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by 123
the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announce- 796
ment was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and 152
the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance 535
under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser 786
and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[9]

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them on pp. 335-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were [114
not coast Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one 197]
of some interest; but as, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[9] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the 262
proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion
bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be
outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer
the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his
share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour
of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to
the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they
regarded as special delicacies.

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukkan* cake garnished with a
pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one
crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful
meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for 515
cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their
hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags.
The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its
base than an egg.

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female 123
voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive
eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring
them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents!
There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions
to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags
disguised.

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the 361
one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former
disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no
less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of 464
the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would 465
earn for the day by working on a *chena*.

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an 411
aude which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said,
"This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, 535
twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered
it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of
a Vedda dance.

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we 241
heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the 533
watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a
variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals.
The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man,
oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We
took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas.

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' 600
lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through
without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls
and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious
fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule
talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its
solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from

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*Team of pack bulls.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

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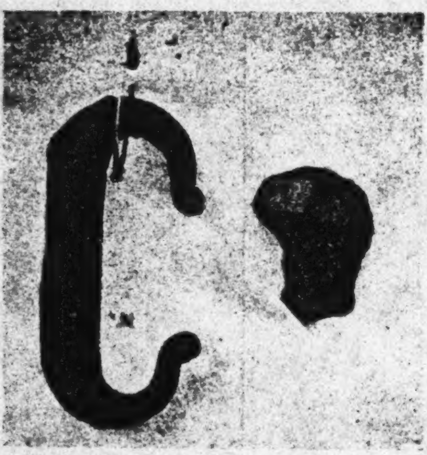
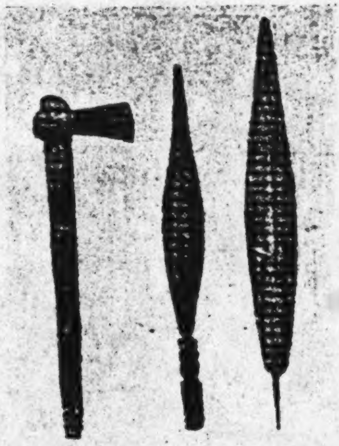
● 535



Strike-a-light and flint. (Page 74)



Vedda axe and audes

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Fire making by rubbing sticks. (Page 74)

[Facing p. 74]

322 is taken, barked, and straightened by being passed rapidly a few times
411 through a flame, and then bent over the knee or between the hands.
It is shaved down to uniform thickness with an arecanut-cutter or arrow blade, and cut to suitable length, roughly gauged by holding it along the outstretched arm from the nearer nipple to the end of the middle finger, giving it an average measure of two and a half feet, or slightly less. An arrow belonging to the great bow I have mentioned, measured three and a half feet. The nock or notch is a quarter of an inch deep and cut square.

411 The arrow is feathered with the wing plumes of the owl, devil-bird,
237 jungle-cock, or large crane (*mana koka*); the owl's, besides being the
284 best, are easily picked up along dry stream beds, on the trees bordering
which the birds usually roost. A feather is split unequally down the rachis, only the larger segment being used. Four such segments, about two inches long, are arranged equidistantly round the shaft, an inch and a quarter from the end, and bound neatly down with *aralu* fire, the mouth helping in the process. The first turns are merely taken round that part of the shaft, which is immediately below the feathers, then round the bared lower ends of the rachis, and then carried along, at spaced intervals, between the carefully separated barbs. Should a strand not prove long enough, it is finished off by having its end tucked in between rachis and shaft, and another is similarly begun. Finally the ruffled barbs are straightened out between the thumb and fingers moistened with saliva. A few turns of fibre just below the notch serve to give grip to the drawing fingers.

411 The arrow-head is made of flattened iron obtained from local blacksmiths. It is three to five inches long, of lanceolate shape in imitation of the *na* leaf, and sharp at the edges; serving as much as a cutting implement as an arrow. By a tang it is let into the end of the shaft to which it is firmly secured with fibre. All the strung parts of the arrow,
[824] as well as the bow-string, are finally dressed with the sticky milk of
kiri-wel to prevent untwisting. Both bow and arrow, being very liable to the ravages of boring insects, are always kept hung over the smoke when not in use.

The method of stringing the bow is by placing one end of it, to which the string is knotted, on the ground, and then pressing on its centre either with the bent knee or by a foot thrust. A correctly strung bow should measure at its centre a span between string and belly of bow; this is rather more than the "fist-mele" (clenched fist with thumb upright) the rough estimate of European stringing.

The arrow release favoured by the Veddas is that in which the cord is drawn with the first joints of the index and middle fingers, the arrow being usually placed on the left of the bow. The style of archery is often peculiar: the arrow fitted to the bow is raised head high; the right elbow is now swung up in an awkward flourish above the head, and then brought slowly down to alignment with the eye, as the string is drawn out to its fullest extent and the arrow delivered.

DANCING

177 The ceremonial dances of the Veddas have been minutely described
and illustrated by Seligmann. The dance we are about to describe
535 seems to have been performed before him in its greatest purity at Henebedde. The differences between his description and ours must be

177

535 attributed to Sinhalese influence, especially the substitution of the mortar for the tripod, the drum for the slapping of hands and thighs, and the introduction of the coconut scraper and betel leaves.

535 796 [776] [787] The *kirikoraha* (milk-chatty)* dance has for its object the co-operation of certain ancestral spirits (*Nae Yakku*) in hunting enterprises. The occasion for it is a period of repeated ill luck, which is attributed to the disfavour of these spirits, whose names are, *Kande Yakka*, the great hunter, his brother *Bilinde Yakka* and their wives *Kudu Hora* (nest thief) and *Pol Hora* (coconut thief) respectively; also *Hath-kudu Hora* (seven-nests thief), elder brother of the two she demons. Significant signs in the ceremony are the fine bubbles that form when the coconut milk is handled, and the manner in which the coconut divides; if the halves are equal the omen is good, in unequal, bad.

[262] In a clearing was placed a mortar and on it a bowl containing a coconut with two arrows laid across the brim. Kaurala, the dancer, took care to eat no meat that morning. Having smeared his head with lime-juice and his body with saffron, he would have worn a white cloth borrowed for the purpose, had we not dissuaded him from covering his picturesque nudity, much to the disapproval of the other Veddas who feared the anger of the spirits invoked.

The dance began quietly enough. Taking up the coconut and an arrow, the performer clasped them together in his hands which he placed now on the shoulder, now on the head, now well before him, as he walked round the mortar chanting a supplication to *Kande Yakka*. Soon he began hopping alternately on each heel, making half-turns with the body so characteristic of Vedda dances, and sweeping his arms semi-circularly. Gradually the monotonous song loudened to the drum-beats, and more and more vigorous became the contortions of the dancer, whose shaggy hair covered his face and whose body streamed with sweat. So he danced for perhaps a half hour, when suddenly he became as one possessed. *Kande Yakka* had "covered" him. Shouting the fearful name he staggered to the mortar and, bending over the bowl, split the coconut in halves. He stood by panting, while the coconut was scraped, the milk prepared, and seven betel leaves were arranged around the sides of the bowl, which was then replaced on the mortar with a single arrow across it. The other arrow, with a betel leaf transfixed in its point, was now in the hands of the dancer who holding it at both ends resumed his movements. *Bilinde Yakka*, the spirit next invoked, soon possessed him. The dance was then continued to each of the other spirits, male and female, in turn. By each of these he was successively possessed. With each possession the strange, wild-eyed figure before us, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, shouted the name of the mastering demon,† and threw lifeless hands on the shoulders of one or other of the onlookers as if for support. Eventually, when the frenzy was at its height, he had just breath enough to gasp out the inspired message that the spirits were propitious and success was assured‡. With his forearm he indicated the length of the quarry's horns and, pointing to the heavens, the favourable time for starting. Then, taking up the two arrows and the bowl containing the two halves of the coconut, the milk and the betel leaves, he danced

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*Coconut milk is the juice obtained by squeezing out with water the scraped kernel of the coconut.

†*Pana kiyanawa.*

‡*Hoay galgawara magalah alla thenawa.*

535 796 to all the spirits combined. Suddenly he stooped, twirled the chatty on the ground, and shouting " hooy ", fell swooning into the arms of one who had for some time been waiting to catch him. The dance was over. He was artist enough to impart something of his wild fervour to his spectators.

224 The next day at the appointed hour we set out, the Veddas buoyed up with the certainty of success. We had not gone far when Kaurala, who was leading, suddenly levelled his gun (or rather mine) and fired. A fine buck bounded away.

" Cha ", he said, examining the spot where the animal had stood; " now why did that animal not fall? So close too. That was the *kirikoraha* deer right enough; did you not see the horns?" When he discovered that he had fired the barrel containing small shot and not the bullet, he fell to cursing my gun.

782 224 Should an animal be killed after a *kirikoraha* ceremony an offering of boiled rice, with flesh from the head and chest, is made to the propitious spirits. Of this offering the hunters may themselves partake with a view to continuance of success.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Habbaka, a weighted frame-work for trapping animals. (Page 48)

The dancers of Bowala. (Page 48)

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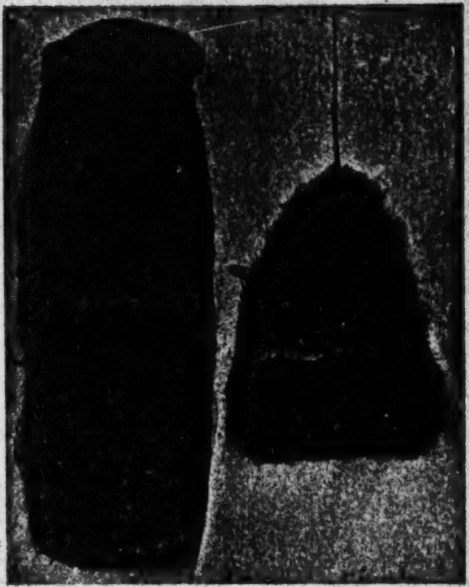

Bag made of threshed *riti* bark and monkey skin pouch. (Page 48)

281
287
415

[Facing p. 49]

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree
that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of
the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of
brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pineapple.

The height[1] was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the
superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then
the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There,
crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadinagala;
to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thanagoda* (breast
mounds) and behind them *Thanakirigoda* (breast milk mound) with
wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks
driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the
summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach
of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale:
A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a
ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing
daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by
just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within
reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it.
When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep
into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards
it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge
collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year.
On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor
fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife
who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena kalangkalangme popahorai*,"
which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 535●
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were
hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with
slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose
and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that
these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted
by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with
great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that [534]
studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch
perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For
a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step
dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they outdistance
us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

[1] [the hill called Westminster Abbey. - Analyst]

Gypsies E15
Ceylon 1

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A
303 man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another
755 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarming blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a
252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the
G picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike
101 those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the
105 jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a
361 medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

000 A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the
V Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That
[132] evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.